



Patient Information - Lithium

Medication Name (with Generic)	Lithium
Expected Benefits	These medications may be used to treat conditions other than those listed. Lithium is used for certain types of over activity, mood instability, and impulse control and usually results in a reduction of symptoms within one to three weeks. Continued treatment can prevent or decrease the intensity of further episodes of these symptoms. Certain types of recurrent depressions may also be decreased in frequency or intensity.
Alternative Treatments	You may discuss these options with your physician: a. No treatment b. Psychotherapy c. Treatment with major tranquilizers d. Other types of medication
Important	It is very important to take your medicine as prescribed and to follow all of your physician's instructions while taking this medicine.

Warning	ON THE DAY OF THE LABORATORY TEST, YOUR MORNING DOSE OF LITHIUM SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL AFTER YOUR BLOOD SAMPLE HAS BEEN TAKEN. It is not necessary to skip breakfast before the test. Do not restrict dietary salt or use diuretics (water pills) without notifying the doctor. Notify the doctor if you develop diarrhea or vomiting, or start sweating more than usual.
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Side Effects *	Any medication may produce unwanted side effects along with the desired results. Some side effects may appear even before the benefit from the medication is seen. If side effects do appear, they usually fade during continued treatment. Examples of side effects which may occur include:		
Frequently	Mild nausea Mild thirst	Metallic taste Slight shakiness	Drowsiness Increased output of urine
Occasionally	Confusion/Poor Memory Fainting Fast or slow heartbeat	Frequent urination Irregular pulse Stiffness in arms or legs	Trouble breathing Unusual tiredness Weight gain
Rarely	Blue color and pain in the fingers and toes Coldness of the arms and legs	Eye pain Headache	Noise in ears Vision problems

***ANY SIDE EFFECTS SHOULD BE REPORTED AND DISCUSSED WITH THE DOCTOR, NURSE, AND / OR PHARMACIST.**

Interactions with other meds, natural products	While in the hospital, your pharmacist and physician watch for drug interactions. If you are an outpatient, you should tell your doctor or dentist about all medication you are taking. It is very important to talk with your doctor or pharmacist to see if other medicines (including medicines obtained without prescription) can be taken safely with this medication
Cautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people may be allergic to this medicine. Symptoms might include skin rash, itching, sneezing, fever, or swelling of the face and tongue. Notify your doctor if you develop any of these symptoms • Your ability to drive or operate machinery may be temporarily impaired due to possible drowsiness or less of muscle control. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how you will react when taking this medication • This medication should only be used during pregnancy when the potential benefits outweigh the unknown potential hazards to the unborn child • Safety and effectiveness for use in children below the age of 6 years have not been established • Do not breastfeed while taking these medications
Food Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large changes in salt intake may alter the blood levels of Lithium. If you have a high salt intake, please discuss with your doctor