

## Oxycodone

### Description

Oxycodone is an opioid medicine used to control pain. Oxycodone is available in many forms taken by mouth:

- Fast-acting 5-mg white tablet and clear liquid taken by mouth (known as Roxicodone<sup>®</sup>)
- A long-acting 10-mg white tablet, 20-mg pink tablet, 40-mg yellow tablet, and 80-mg green tablet (known as Oxycontin<sup>®</sup>)
- A fast-acting combination with acetaminophen (Percocet<sup>®</sup>, Endocet<sup>®</sup>)

### How to take oxycodone

- If you are only taking the fast-acting form of oxycodone, you will probably need to take the medicine every 2 to 6 hours to relieve pain. Keep a record of the number of tablets or the amount of liquid medicine you take each day. Take this record to the clinic. This record will help your doctor give you the best possible pain control.
- If you are taking both the fast-acting and long-acting forms of oxycodone, you may only need to take the fast-acting form occasionally for “breakthrough” pain.
- If you are taking the long-acting form of oxycodone, you must take it on a regular schedule to receive the best pain relief. Long-acting oxycodone is usually taken every 8 to 12 hours.
- Do not cut, chew, or crush the long-acting tablets. Swallow them whole.
- If stomach upset occurs, take oxycodone with food.
- If you are taking Percocet<sup>®</sup> or Endocet<sup>®</sup>, do not take other acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>) medicines. This could result in a dose of Tylenol<sup>®</sup> that is too high.

### Possible side effects

#### Early

- Feeling drowsy
- Nausea
- Slower than normal rates of breathing
- Low blood pressure

#### Later (usually more than a day after treatment starts)

- Constipation
- Itching and hives
- Feeling drowsy; sedation
- Feeling dizzy
- Nausea and vomiting

*This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.*

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- Mood changes (feeling sadder or happier than usual)
- Dry mouth
- Fainting
- Problems urinating

These are the most common side effects, but there may be others. Please report all side effects to the doctor or nurse. **In case of a severe side effect or reaction, call the doctor, nurse, or pharmacist at 595-3300. If you are outside the Memphis area, dial toll-free 1-866-2STJUDE (1-866-278-5833), and press 0 once the call is connected.**

### Special instructions

- If you have any of the side effects listed above, most should decrease after you have taken oxycodone for a couple of days. Tell your doctor if the side effects increase while taking this medicine. It may mean you need less oxycodone.
- If you are taking this medicine regularly, do not stop this medicine until the doctor tells you to do so. Stopping oxycodone without slowly decreasing the dose can lead to diarrhea, headache, sweating, muscle cramps, trouble sleeping, nausea, vomiting, or feeling restless.
- This medicine may cause you to feel dizzy or drowsy. Oxycodone may impair your ability to drive a car or operate heavy machinery. Do not take part in these activities if you are sleepy, drowsy, dizzy, or not alert after taking oxycodone.
- If you have missed sleep because of your pain, when you start this medicine you may sleep more for the first few days to “catch up” on missed sleep.
- If you are taking this medicine regularly, then you should increase your fluid and fiber intake to help prevent constipation. Tell your doctor or nurse if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 to 5 days. You may need to take a stool softener or laxative to relieve your constipation.
- If you have taken oxycodone for a long time, your doctor may slowly decrease your dose to wean you off oxycodone. During this time, watch for a sudden onset of diarrhea, headache, sweating, muscle cramps, trouble sleeping, nausea, vomiting, or feeling restless. If these symptoms occur, call your doctor right away. It could mean your dose is being decreased too fast.
- Other medicines can increase the drowsy feeling caused by oxycodone. These medicines include:
  - Alcohol (found in many over-the-counter cough and cold medicines),
  - Diphenhydramine (over-the-counter Benadryl<sup>®</sup>),
  - Promethazine,
  - Diazepam or lorazepam,
  - Antidepressants (such as amitriptyline), and
  - Medicines used to treat seizures (such as phenytoin, carbamazepine, gabapentin, phenobarbital, and valproic acid).
- Always tell your doctor if you are taking these medicines or if you start taking any new medicine while taking oxycodone.

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