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INFORMATION ON CLINDAMYCIN

What is Clindamycin?

- Clindamycin is an antibiotic. It is sometimes used to treat certain scarring hair loss conditions

How is Clindamycin prescribed?

- Dr. Donovan will advise how much and how often to take clindamycin
- You should remain upright for 30 minutes after taking the medicine.
- Nausea, vomiting and heart burn are more likely to occur if you lie down within 30 minutes after taking Clindamycin
- Dr. Donovan may order blood tests before you start (blood counts, liver and kidney tests) and repeat these while you are on the clindamycin

Can I use Clindamycin with other treatments?

- Be sure to advise your doctor of all the medications you are on, including erythromycin,
- Clindamycin may increase the effects of certain drugs used during surgery, so be sure to tell any doctor if you are going to be having any surgeries while using this medication.
- Clindamycin may be prescribed with another antibiotic called rifampin

Who should not use Clindamycin?

Your doctor may not prescribe Clindamycin if

- You are also taking erythromycin or chloramphenicol
- You are allergic to clindamycin
- You have Crohn's disease or other bowel diseases
- You have kidney disease or liver disease
- You have recently been on a proton pump inhibitor drug (Losec, Prevacid)
- You have recently had bowel surgery
- You are over 65
- You have been on a lot of antibiotics recently (last 2 months)
- You have diabetes

What side effects are possible with Clindamycin?

- The most severe common side effect of Clindamycin is an infectious diarrheal condition called "*Clostridium difficile associated pseudomembranous colitis*" Patients with this condition develop a very offensive smelling diarrhea, fever, and abdominal pain. In severe cases, life threatening complications can develop including an enlarged bowel called toxic megacolon. Sometimes patients can develop this severe reaction with no risk factors. Therefore, one can not predict who will get pseudomembranous colitis and who will not. This condition can even occur a few weeks after the treatment has stopped so you need to continue to watch for diarrhea.
- Other side effects found in over 1% of patients include: nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, cramps, and rash
- Oral thrush (white patches in the mouth due to Candida infection) can develop while on Clindamycin. Women may develop a yeast infection.

Other side effects of Clindamycin

- Other rare side effects, occurring in less than 0.1 % of patients include
 - allergy and anaphylaxis
 - a drop in blood counts
 - arthritis and joint problems
 - liver problems and liver toxicity

What side effects should prompt me to STOP Clindamycin and get medical advice?

- Stop taking clindamycin and get medical help if you have diarrhea that is watery or bloody
- Do not use anti-diarrheal medications unless advised by a doctor
- Even if you don't have diarrhea, you should get checked by your family doctor or Dr Donovan if you have fever and abdominal pain.
- This may be an early sign of pseudomembranous colitis

Patients who develop oral thrush or women who develop vaginal discharge due to a yeast infection do NOT need to stop the clindamycin. It is important to see your family doctor so that these can be treated.

