



Diphenhydramine HCl (Benadryl)

Information and dosage chart

What is diphenhydramine HCl?

Diphenhydramine HCl is an *antihistamine*, a type of medicine that prevents allergy symptoms. These symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, itching, watery eyes, and rashes or hives (skin welts or raised, red itchy bumps). Diphenhydramine HCl can also be used with other drugs to treat *anaphylactic shock* (also called *anaphylaxis*), a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction. Taking diphenhydramine HCl usually makes you feel sleepy. But it can also make you feel “on edge” or excited.

What is the right dose?

Give the dose recommended for your child’s weight for most allergy symptoms. See the dosage chart below. If your child is under 12 months of age, give 1 mg per 1 kilogram (0.5 mg per pound) of body weight. Doses may be repeated every 6 to 8 hours, if needed. Do **not** give diphenhydramine HCl to children under 12 months of age who have chickenpox, unless your child’s doctor tells you to.

- For **hives**: The dose may need to be repeated every 6 hours for 24 hours or more.
- For **anaphylaxis**: If the child can swallow, give **2 times the dose below**.

Weight	Dose	Liquid or Elixir 12.5 mg per teaspoon (5 ml)	Chewable Tablets 12.5 mg, scored	Non-chewable Tablets, Caplets, Softgels 25 mg	Adult-Strength Capsules 50 mg
12 to 20 lbs (5.5 to 9 kg)	6.25 mg	½ teaspoon or 2.5 ml			
20 to 24 lbs (9 to 11 kg)	10 mg	¾ teaspoon or 4 ml			
25 to 35 lbs (11 to 16 kg)	12.5 mg	1 teaspoon or 5 ml	1 tablet		
36 to 50 lbs (16 to 22.5 kg)	18 mg	1½ teaspoons or 7.2 ml	1½ tablets		
50 to 64 lbs (22.5 to 29 kg)	25 mg	2 teaspoons or 10 ml	2 tablets	1 tablet or capsule	
65 to 74 lbs (29 to 33.5 kg)	32.5 mg	2½ teaspoons or 13 ml	2½ tablet	1 tablet or capsule	
75 to 120 lbs (33.5 to 54.5 kg)	37.5 mg	3 teaspoons or 15 ml	3 tablets	1½ tablets	
Over 120 lbs (Over 54.5 kg)	50 mg		3 or 4 tablets	2 tablets or capsules	1, and NO MORE than 6 in 24 hours

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Pediatric Care Center:
206-598-3000

Cautions

- Read the label. Be sure that the product you are giving your child is diphenhydramine HCl. There are many products with similar names or with other ingredients added.
- Since diphenhydramine HCl thickens secretions (mucus and phlegm), use it with caution if your child has asthma or wheezing.
- Be sure to read the labels of all medicines given to your child to ensure that your child is getting only 1 medicine at a time that contains diphenhydramine HCl. For example, do not use Benadryl cream along with Wal-Dryl liquid.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor if your child has:

- Other underlying health problems, such as seizures, thyroid problems, or a urinary tract infection
- Had adverse reactions to this or any antihistamine in the past

Side Effects and Adverse Reactions

Use the lowest effective dose of diphenhydramine HCl to lessen side effects and adverse reactions. These may include:

- Drowsiness
- Sedation
- Dry mouth
- Excitability
- Restlessness
- Dizziness

Brands of Diphenhydramine HCl

Here are some common brand names you may want to try:

Benadryl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Benadryl Allergy Liquid and Chewables
Bartell’s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bena-Histamine Caplets and Tablets, 25 mg • ValuRite ValuDryl Allergy Liquid
Safeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benehist Liquid, Chewables, and Tablets
Rite-Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphendryl
Walgreens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wal-Dryl

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