

**Brand Name**

Pennsaid

**Common Name**

diclofenac topical solution

**How does this medication work? What will it do for me?**

Diclofenac belongs to the class of medications known as *nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs* (NSAIDs). It works by reducing pain, swelling, and inflammation. **The topical solution (a lotion applied to the skin) is used to relieve symptoms such as pain associated with osteoarthritis of the knee.** This medication should be used continuously for no more than three months.

Your doctor may have suggested this medication for conditions other than the ones listed in these drug information articles. If you have not discussed this with your doctor or are not sure why you are taking this medication, speak to your doctor. **Do not stop taking this medication without consulting your doctor.**

**Do not give this medication to anyone else, even if they have the same symptoms as you do.** It can be harmful for people to take this medication if their doctor has not prescribed it.

**How should I use this medication?**

**The usual adult dose of diclofenac topical solution is 40 drops applied to the knee four times daily at evenly spaced time intervals.** Apply it only to clean, dry skin.

- Squeeze 10 drops of diclofenac topical solution into the hand or directly onto the knee.
- Spread the solution evenly around the front, back, and sides of the knee.
- Repeat this procedure until 40 drops have been applied and the knee is completely covered.
- To treat the other knee, repeat the procedure.
- Allow several minutes for the medication to dry.
- Wash hands after applying the medication, and avoid contact with eyes or mucous membranes.

**Do not apply the medication to infected, abraded, or open skin.** Do not use dressings that do not breathe on top of this medication. This medication is for external use only, and should not be taken by mouth. The topical solution should not be used for longer than three months.

Many things can affect the dose of a medication that a person needs, such as body weight, other medical conditions, and other medications. **If your doctor has recommended a dose different from the ones listed here,** do not change the way that you are taking the medication without consulting your doctor.

It is important that this medication be taken exactly as prescribed by your doctor. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible and continue with your regular schedule. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule. **Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.**

Store this medication at room temperature, protect it from light and moisture, and keep it out of the reach of children.

**What form(s) does this medication come in?**

**Pennsaid® is available as a topical solution.**

**1.5 mg/mL:** *Type:* topical solution. *Appearance:* clear, odourless. *Active ingredient:* 1.5% of diclofenac. *Nonmedicinal ingredients:* dimethyl sulfoxide, glycerine, propylene glycol, ethanol, and purified water.

**Who should NOT take this medication?**

**Diclofenac topical solution should not be used by anyone who:**

- currently has or has recently had inflammatory diseases of the stomach or intestines, such as a stomach or intestinal ulcer or ulcerative colitis
- has significant liver impairment or liver disease
- has severely impaired or deteriorating kidney function
- is currently taking other NSAID's (e.g., ibuprofen, naproxen)
- is or may be allergic to diclofenac or any of the ingredients of the medication
- has had an allergic reaction to ASA or other anti-inflammatory medications
- is a child
- is pregnant or breast-feeding

**What side effects are possible with this medication?**

**Many medications can cause side effects.** A side effect is an unwanted response to a medication when it is taken in normal doses. Side effects can be mild or severe, temporary or permanent. The side effects listed below are not experienced by everyone who takes this medication. **If you are concerned about side effects, discuss the risks and benefits of this medication with your doctor.**

**The following side effects have been reported by at least 1% of people taking this medication.**

**Contact your doctor if you experience these side effects and they are severe or bothersome. Your pharmacist may be able to advise you on managing side effects.**

- burning, dry, red, itchy, scaly, thickened, or tingling skin at site of application
- heartburn or indigestion
- nausea
- stomach upset or pain

**Check with your doctor as soon as possible if any of the following side effects occur:**

- abnormal burning, pain, or prickling feeling on skin at application site
- flu-like syndrome that may include bodyache, headache, or fever with or without chills
- joint pain
- abnormal burning or prickling feeling
- change in taste sensation
- changes in vision
- eye pain
- migraine
- high blood pressure
- increased sensitivity of eyes to light
- nasal congestion
- pain or tenderness around eyes or cheekbones
- redness or swelling of eyes
- skin rash other than at the application site
- sore throat
- stomach upset or pain
- ulcers or sores on skin other than at the application site
- wheezing

**Stop taking the medication and seek immediate medical attention if *any* of the following occur:**

- chest pain
- irregular heartbeat
- signs of an allergic reaction (hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of the face, tongue, or throat)
- swelling of the hands, feet, or ankles (if you are having difficulty breathing)

**Some people may experience side effects other than those listed.** Check with your doctor if you notice any symptom that worries you while you are taking this medication.

**Are there any other precautions or warnings for this medication?**

**Be sure to inform your doctor of all your medical conditions before you begin taking a medication. Some conditions can affect how you should take this medication.**

**Drowsiness/reduced alertness:** Some people have reported headache, dizziness, lightheadedness, and confusion while taking this medication. Avoid operating motor vehicles and doing other potentially hazardous activities until you have determined the effect this medication has on you.

**Hepatic porphyria:** People with hepatic porphyria should use this medication with caution, as it may trigger an attack.

**Infection:** This medication may mask some of the signs of infection.

**Kidney function:** People with reduced kidney function may need lower doses and more frequent medical check-ups while using this medication.

**Stomach:** Stomach ulcers and bleeding from the stomach have been known to occur when diclofenac is taken by mouth. These complications can occur at any time and are sometimes severe enough to require immediate medical attention. Although these reactions have not been known to occur with diclofenac topical solution, you should seek medical attention immediately if you notice any signs of bleeding (such as dark tarry stools, blood in the stools, or vomiting of material that looks like coffee grounds).

**Vision:** Other medications in the same family as diclofenac may cause vision changes such as blurred or decreased vision. If you notice vision changes, stop using the medication and check with your doctor.

**Pregnancy:** This medication should not be used during pregnancy unless the benefits outweigh the risks. If you become pregnant while taking this medication, stop taking it immediately and call your doctor.

**Breast-feeding:** This medication may pass into breast milk. If the use of diclofenac topical solution is considered essential, stop breast-feeding.

**Children:** The safety and effectiveness of using this medication have not been established for children.

**Seniors:** Seniors may have a higher risk of side effects with this medication. Seniors may need lower doses of this medication and more frequent medical check-ups.

**What other drugs could interact with this medication?**

**The following may affect how diclofenac works or increase the risk of side effects:**

- acetaminophen
- ASA
- alcohol
- corticosteroids (e.g., prednisone)
- heparin
- other NSAIDs (e.g., naproxen, indomethacin)
- probenecid
- quinolone antibiotics (e.g., ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, gatifloxacin)
- warfarin

**Diclofenac may affect the way the following work or increase the risk of side effects:**

- acetaminophen
- alcohol
- ASA
- beta-adrenergic blockers (e.g., metoprolol, atenolol)
- cyclosporine
- digoxin
- diuretics (water pills; e.g., spironolactone)
- heparin
- lithium
- methotrexate
- medications for diabetes (e.g., glyburide, metformin)
- other NSAIDs (e.g., naproxen, indomethacin)
- corticosteroids (e.g., prednisone)
- quinolone antibiotics
- warfarin

**If you are taking any of these medications, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.**

Depending on your specific circumstances, your doctor may want you to:

- stop taking one of the medications,
- change one of the medications to another,
- change how you are taking one or both of the medications, or
- leave everything as is.

**An interaction between two medications does not always mean that you must stop taking one of them.** Speak to your doctor about how any drug interactions are being managed or should be managed.

**Medications other than those listed above may interact with this medication.** Tell your doctor or prescriber about all prescription, over-the-counter (non-prescription), and herbal medications you are taking. Also tell them about any supplements you take. Since caffeine, alcohol, the nicotine from cigarettes, or street drugs can affect the action of many medications, you should let your prescriber know if you use them.