

Tetracycline

Tetracycline is an antibiotic that has been used for many years and has a long safety record. We frequently use it to treat acne, rosacea, folliculitis, and other inflammatory skin conditions, as well as certain infections. For chronic conditions, we are using its anti-inflammatory properties, and thus the medication may be continued for long periods. For infections, the typical course of treatment is 1–2 weeks.

General Instructions & Common Side Effects:

- This medication should be taken with a full glass of water (*8 oz*), and at least one hour before bedtime or naps (*lying flat*). This will decrease the chance that you develop inflammation or ulcers of the esophagus.
- **Do not take tetracycline with iron tablets or antacids** (*e.g., Maalox or Mylanta*).
- This medication must be taken on an empty stomach. **Do not take the medication with dairy products** (*milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream*). Dairy products may be consumed at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after taking your tetracycline.
- If you are having significant nausea or reflux symptoms (*heartburn*), please stop the medication and call our office.
- Do not take this medication if you are **pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding**.

Sun Sensitivity:

This medication can cause **sun sensitivity**. Please make sure that you are wearing sunscreen and practicing sun-protective measures. If you notice that you are getting a sunburn easily, please stop your medication and call our office. You should **never use tanning beds**, but especially do not use them while on this medication.

Other Potential Side Effects:

- Some women may develop a **yeast infection** while on this medication.
- This medication can stain the permanent teeth that are developing in children. For this reason, this medication is **not safe to take in children under the age of 9**.
- Most evidence suggests that tetracycline **does not reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills**. However, some patients may feel more comfortable using a backup method of contraception.
- Very rarely, tetracycline can cause an **increased pressure in the brain**. Symptoms include headache, vision changes, hearing a pulse in your ear, and dizziness. If any of these symptoms occur, discontinue your medication and call our office.

If you develop a rash, diarrhea, heartburn, or stomach upset, please stop the medication and call our office at **(205) 682-8022**.