

Ethambutol: A patient's guide to taking medicine for tuberculosis

What is Ethambutol?

Ethambutol (EMB) is an antibiotic medicine used to treat tuberculosis (TB) disease (when taken with other Medications).

The TB germs are very strong and are hard to kill. You will need to take this medicine for two or more months in order to kill the TB bacteria. Your doctor will decide exactly how many months you will need to take the medicine.

How do I take this medicine?

- It is very important to take the medicine every day or as instructed by your doctor.
- Tell your doctor right away if you stop taking your medicine.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible, but never take two doses at one time.
- You may take the medicine with or without food.
- Store EMB in a cool, dry place.
- Remember to tell your doctor about other medicines you are taking or any new medicines that you start taking.

***This medicine may be taken one or two times a day depending on what your doctor has prescribed.**

***If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, talk to your doctor before taking this medicine.**

What are some side effects I should watch out for?

- You will need to be monitored regularly by your doctor while taking Ethambutol.
- Some common side effects are:
 - Loss of appetite
 - Upset stomach
 - Skin rash
- If you have any of the following more serious side effects, stop taking the medicine and call your doctor.
 - EMB may cause changes in how well you see with one or both eyes. If you have blurred vision or changes in how you see colors, call your doctor as soon as possible.
 - If you take this medicine for longer than two months, you will need to have your eyes checked.

Tips for taking TB medicine:

- Take your medicine at the same time every day, for example:
 - Before going to bed
 - First thing in the morning
- Use a weekly pill container
- Mark off each day on a calendar after you take your pills
- Ask a family member or friend to remind you
- Consider Directly Observed Therapy (DOT)