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Praziquantel (Biltricide)

Basics, Side Effects, Reviews & More



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Praziquantel (Biltricide) is the first-choice medication used to treat infections caused by liver or blood flukes, which are different types of parasitic worms typically found in unclean drinking water or raw fish. Treatment is by mouth and typically lasts only 1 day. It's available as a lower-cost generic medication.

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Drug Info

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GENERIC STATUS

Lower-cost generic available

AVAILABILITY

Prescription only

Reviewed by:

[Ally Tsai, PharmD](#)

[Connie Zheng, PharmD](#)

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What is praziquantel (Biltricide)?

How praziquantel (Biltricide) works

Praziquantel (Biltricide) is an antiparasitic medication. It treats infections caused by flukes that infect human blood, liver or bile duct. The exact way that praziquantel (Biltricide) works isn't known at this time. But it's thought to kill the flukes by causing severe spasms in their muscle.

What is praziquantel (Biltricide) used for?

- Treatment of blood fluke infections (schistosomiasis)
- Treatment of liver fluke infections (clonorchiasis or opisthorchiasis)

Praziquantel (Biltricide) dosage forms



Dose Pack

6 tablets of 600mg

Typical dosing for praziquantel (Biltricide)

Dosing for praziquantel (Biltricide) is based on body weight and your healthcare provider will determine the appropriate dose for you. All following dosings are for adults and children 1 year or older.

- **Blood fluke infections:** The typical dose is 20 mg/kg by mouth three times a day (4 to 6 hours apart) for 1 day only.
- **Liver fluke infections:** The typical dose is 25 mg/kg by mouth three times a day (4 to 6 hours apart) for 1 day only.

*Please note: CDC's current dosing recommendations for praziquantel (Biltricide) are different for **blood flukes** and **certain types of liver flukes** compared with the manufacturer's guidelines. Please read the FAQ section for details.*

Frequently asked questions about praziquantel (Biltricide)

✓ **Is one treatment of praziquantel (Biltricide) enough to kill all the blood flukes?**

While praziquantel (Biltricide) generally works well to treat blood and liver flukes, it might not be able to cure all infections. The [CDC](#) recommends that some people might need a second treatment with praziquantel (Biltricide) 2 to 4 weeks after their first treatment to make sure the infection is completely gone. Please follow up with your provider after your first treatment to see if a repeated treatment is needed for you.

› **Can I take praziquantel (Biltricide) if I am pregnant?**

- > **Can I take praziquantel (Biltricide) if I am breastfeeding?**





- > **Why does the CDC have a slightly different dosing recommendation and age-cutoffs for praziquantel (Biltricide) than the manufacturer?**

- > **Can I use praziquantel (Biltricide) to treat tapeworms?**




- > **Is praziquantel also a pet medication?**

Pros and cons of praziquantel (Biltricide)









Pros

-  Works well to treat [most types of blood flukes](#)
-  The only FDA approved medication for treatment of liver flukes
-  Tablets can be crushed and mixed with food or liquid, so it's good for people who can't swallow tablets
-  Available as a lower-cost generic medication

Cons

-  The tablets taste bitter and can cause you to gag or vomit
-  People with liver problems experience more side effects
-  Interact with some common medications or food, such as [diltiazem \(Cardizem\)](#), [verapamil](#), [carbamazepine \(Tegretol\)](#), or grapefruit juice

Pharmacist tips for praziquantel (Biltricide)

-  Take praziquantel (Biltricide) with meals. Use water to help you swallow the tablet quickly. Avoid chewing the tablet because it tastes bitter and can cause you to gag or vomit.
-  If you have trouble swallowing, praziquantel (Biltricide) can be crushed and mixed with semi-solid food, such as applesauce, oatmeal or various pureed vegetables. Make sure to take the entire mixture within 1 hour of mixing.
-  The praziquantel (Biltricide) tablet has score lines that make it easier for you to split the medication based on your provider's direction. You can break off the parts evenly by pressing down on the score from the outer end of the tablet. If you're not sure how to get the dose you need, please ask your local pharmacist for assistance.
-  Don't take praziquantel (Biltricide) with [rifampin \(Rifadin\)](#), an antibiotic commonly used to prevent and treat tuberculosis and other infections. Rifampin (Rifadin) can make praziquantel (Biltricide) work less well, and put you at risk for serious infection by liver or blood flukes. Your provider should stop rifampin (Rifadin) 4 weeks before starting praziquantel (Biltricide) and restart rifampin (Rifadin) a day after finishing treatment. If you can't stop rifampin (Rifadin), ask your provider about other medications to treat your blood or liver fluke infection.
-  Praziquantel (Biltricide) can put you at higher risk for seizures. If you have a history of seizures, be very careful and watch your body for symptoms such as seizures, severe headaches, confusion, unable to focus, or difficulty with balance. If possible, make sure you're near a clinic or hospital on the day of or for a few days after treatment with praziquantel (Biltricide), so that you can get medical help if needed.
-  Praziquantel (Biltricide) can put you at higher risk of heart rhythm problems. If you experience symptoms of heart flutter, slow or fast heartbeat, lightheadedness or dizziness, or shortness of breath while taking praziquantel (Biltricide), please let your provider know so they can monitor your heart.
-  Don't drive a car or operate machinery on the day of or the day following treatment with praziquantel (Biltricide), as this medication can make you sleepy.
-  Praziquantel (Biltricide) might not prevent all infections from getting worse, especially if it's your first time getting a blood fluke infection ([acute phase schistosomiasis](#)). Please let your provider know if you develop symptoms such

as rash, fever, headache, muscle pain, stomach pain, trouble breathing, diarrhea, constipation, or bloody stool. These might be signs that your infection is getting worse.





Prices for praziquantel (Biltricide) start at just \$147.21 with a GoodRx coupon. They're fast, easy-to-use and free!

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What are the side effects of praziquantel (Biltricide)?

With any medication, there are risks and benefits. Even if the medication is working, you may experience some unwanted side effects.

-  Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following:
 - **Stevens-Johnson syndrome:** skin pain, fever, sore throat, fatigue, rash, large blisters, facial swelling and swollen lips
 - **Irregular heart rhythm problems:** heart flutter, slow or fast heartbeat, lightheadedness or dizziness, shortness of breath
 - **Seizures**
 - **Brain or nervous system problems:** severe headaches, confusion, lack of attention to people and surroundings, fainting
-  The following side effects may get better over time as your body gets used to the medication. Let your doctor know immediately if you continue to experience these symptoms or if they worsen over time.

Common side effects

- Feeling tired or weak
- Headache

- Dizziness
- Belly discomfort
- Nausea
- Itchy, red swelling on the skin
- Drowsiness
- Fever

Other side effects

- Difficulty keeping your balance
- Ringing in one or both of your ears
- Changes in vision
- Bloody diarrhea
- Muscle pain or weakness
- Dark urine
- Yellow skin
- Tremor
- Having no appetite
- Rash
- Itching

Source: [DailyMed](#)

The following side effects have also been reported:

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What are the risks and warnings for praziquantel (Biltricide)?

Praziquantel (Biltricide) can cause some serious health issues. This risk may be even higher for certain groups. If this worries you, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about

other options

Suddenly feeling very sick

- **Risk factors:** *New blood fluke infection*

Very rarely, your body can react to praziquantel (Biltricide) in a way that causes you to suddenly feel extremely sick. If not treated, it might lead to death. You're at higher risk for this type of dangerous reaction if you're taking praziquantel (Biltricide) to treat your very first blood fluke infection ([acute phase schistosomiasis](#)). Contact your provider right away if you experience blurred vision, severe headache, weakness in your arms and legs, dizziness, or have a seizure.

Brain and nervous system problems

- **Risk factors:** *History of seizures | Fluke infections*

Parasites (such as blood flukes, liver flukes or tapeworms) can sometimes [cause problems to your brain or nervous system](#) and result in seizures, confusion, or headaches. If you have these symptoms, taking praziquantel (Biltricide) can make them feel worse. Please ask your provider if praziquantel (Biltricide) is the option for you if you have a history of seizures or you have these symptoms.

More side effects in people with liver problems

- **Risk factors:** *Blood fluke infection | Moderate or severe liver problems*

Praziquantel (Biltricide) might cause more side effects if you have a history of liver problems because this medication stays in your body longer. Please call your provider right away if you experience any side effects that bother you or don't go away, such as feeling tired or weak, dizziness, headache, belly discomfort.

Heart rhythm problems

Praziquantel (Biltricide) can cause heart rhythm problems such as slow or fast heartbeat. Please let your provider know if you have a history of irregular heartbeat or if you have symptoms of lightheadedness or dizziness during treatment of praziquantel (Biltricide). Your provider might want to check your heart rhythm.

Interactions with other medications

Certain medications can get in the way of how your body gets rid of praziquantel (Biltricide). It affects the amount of praziquantel in your body, how well the medication

works, and the risk of side effects. In particular, praziquantel (Biltricide) shouldn't be taken with [rifampin \(Rifadin\)](#), an antibiotic commonly used to prevent and treat tuberculosis and other infections. Rifampin (Rifadin) can make praziquantel (Biltricide) work less well. Your provider should stop rifampin (Rifadin) 4 weeks before starting praziquantel (Biltricide). Rifampin (Rifadin) can resume a day after finishing treatment with praziquantel (Biltricide). If rifampin (Rifadin) can't be discontinued, other medications should be used instead. Before starting treatment with praziquantel (Biltricide), please let your provider know about all the medicines you take so they can make sure it is safe for you.

Interactions between praziquantel (Biltricide) and other medications

Praziquantel (Biltricide) may interact with certain medications or supplements. Always let your doctor and pharmacist know about any other medications or supplements (including prescribed and over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements) that you are currently taking. The list below does not include all possible drug interactions with praziquantel (Biltricide). Please note that only the generic name of each medication is listed below.

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How much does praziquantel (Biltricide) cost?

Praziquantel (Biltricide) is available as a generic medication and may be significantly cheaper compared to the brand version. Unless there is a specific reason you need the brand, the generic medication will be a better value. For even more savings, use a GoodRx coupon and pay just a fraction of the retail price.

Lowest GoodRx Price
Biltricide (brand)

\$103.95

**Lowest GoodRx Price
praziquantel (generic)**

\$147.21

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Pricing based on most commonly-filled versions: 1 dose packs (6 tablets) of praziquantel 600mg

What is the latest news about praziquantel (Biltricide)?



I Think My Dog Has a Tapeworm — What Should I Do?

Tapeworms in dogs can lead to a wide range of health problems if left untreated. Learn more about what to do if your dog gets a tapeworm in this guide.



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