



Patient & Family Guide  
2020

# Rocaltrol<sup>®</sup> (Calcitriol) and Hemodialysis



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Rocaltrol® (Calcitriol) and Hemodialysis

## What is Rocaltrol® (calcitriol)?

- Rocaltrol® is a medicine that contains the active ingredient calcitriol, which is a form of vitamin D that can be used by the body.
- It acts as a hormone in your body to control the levels of calcium and phosphate, which are needed to build healthy bone.
- It comes as a capsule (0.25 mcg or 0.5 mcg), and as a liquid (1 mcg/ml).

## Why does someone on hemodialysis need this medicine?

- People with kidney disease cannot change enough vitamin D into calcitriol. (We get vitamin D from sunlight, and from eating oily fish and milk products.)
- This can cause low levels of calcium in the blood and bone problems.
- This medicine skips the step done by the kidneys and increases the amount of vitamin D in your body that can be used.

## How do I take Rocaltrol®?

- Take this medicine EXACTLY as your health care provider tells you.

- Do not stop taking it without first talking with your health care provider.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you can.
- But, if it is almost time for your next dose, DO NOT double the dose.
- This medicine can be taken with water, and swallowed without chewing.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- If your stomach feels upset after taking this medicine, try taking it with food.

## **Are there any side effects?**

### **Common side effects are:**

- › nausea (upset stomach)
- › itching
- › headaches

### **Less common side effects are:**

- › constipation (not being able to poop)
- › vomiting (throwing up)
- › loss of appetite
- › trouble sleeping
- › peeing more than usual
- › drowsiness
- › dry mouth
- › muscle or bone pain
- › heartbeat that is not regular
- › red eyes

# How do I store this medicine?

- Capsules should be stored at room temperature (15 to 25° C), away from moisture and light (e.g., bathroom medicine cabinet), Keep this medicine out of reach of children and pets.
- Liquid should be stored at room temperature (15 to 25° C), away from sunlight, and out of reach of children and pets.

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

## Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.