



Important Drug and Food Information

From the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center
Drug-Nutrient Interaction Task Force

Important information to know when you take any of the following drugs:

Amiodarone (Cordarone, Pacerone)
Buspirone (Buspar)
Carbamazepine (Tegretol)
Cyclosporine (Gengraf, Neoral)

Nifedipine (Procardia, Aldalat)
Simvastatin (Zocor)
Sirolimus (Rapamune)
Tacrolimus (Prograf)

Grapefruit can interact with the drugs listed above.

When taking any of these drugs, avoid:

- ▶ Grapefruit juice
- ▶ Fresh, canned, or frozen grapefruit
- ▶ Drinks that contain grapefruit juice

Check labels of juices, juice blends, fruit drinks, marinades and sodas for grapefruit.

What is a drug-nutrient interaction?

A drug-nutrient interaction can occur when the food you eat affects how your medicine works.

The effect of the medicine may be changed, or there may be serious side effects.

Do citrus fruits other than grapefruit cause the same problem?

Grapefruit, unlike other fruit in the citrus family, contains chemical compounds that can affect how some medicines are absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract. The absorption of some drugs can be increased or decreased, so that the amount of drug in your body is not right.

Other citrus fruits, such as clementines, lemons, oranges and tangerines do not cause a problem when taken with these drugs.

What will happen if I accidentally have grapefruit?

It is unlikely that an accidental, one-time eating or drinking of small amounts of grapefruit products will cause serious problems. Grapefruit can affect drug absorption for several days, however. Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you think you are experiencing side effects.

What if I have always taken my medication with grapefruit?

It is recommended that you stop having grapefruit. Alert your pharmacist and doctor that you have made this change.

Does this mean I will never be able to have grapefruit again?

Until more is known, it is strongly recommended that you change to other fruits and juices while taking drugs that are known to interact with grapefruit. Scientists are working to see whether grapefruit juice can be processed in the future to keep it from interacting with drugs.

What is the possibility that grapefruit affects other drugs that I take?

While studies are by no means complete, it has been found that grapefruit may change the absorption of several prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Always ask your pharmacist if there is current information about the medicines you take, and the possibility of a food-drug interaction.

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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National Institutes of Health Clinical Center
Bethesda, MD 20892

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