

## DIETHYLENETRIAMINE PENTAACETATE (DTPA) FACT SHEET

### What is DTPA?

DTPA is a calcium (Ca-DTPA) or zinc salt (Zn-DTPA) that is used to perform medical imaging of the brain, kidneys, and lungs. It can also be used to remove certain radioactive materials, except uranium or neptunium, from a person's body.

### How does DTPA work?

DTPA is capable of binding to certain radioactive materials and speed up the release of these materials in the urine, thus reducing the amount of internal contamination.

### How is DTPA given and for how long?

DTPA is most effective if given within the first 24 hours after internal contamination. However, DTPA is still effective several days or weeks after a person has been internally contaminated.

It is given through the vein in the arm by intravenous infusion over a 2-hour period or a 3-to 5- minute period using a syringe by a health care professional. DTPA may need to be given as often as 5 days a week for a period of several years to ensure that the body excretes as much radioactive material as possible.

### What are the side effects?

DTPA does not build up in the body or cause long-term health effects. People who are given repeat doses of Ca-DTPA within a short period of time may have some of the side effects which include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, fever, itching skin, and muscle cramps, but these symptoms decrease between treatments. Ca-DTPA is safe for most adults, but people who have kidney disease or bone marrow depression, pregnant women or children younger than 18 years of age **should not** take it. Children and pregnant women under a doctor's care can take Zn-DTPA in small doses.

### What should I do if I have a reaction to DTPA?

If you have a reaction to the drug, call your **doctor or 911** right away for medical attention. Do not drive yourself to the hospital as you may become very ill on your way.

### Where can I get more information on DTPA?

[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

[www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us)

[www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkhsfs.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkhsfs.htm)

**Source of information:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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[www.hcphe.org](http://www.hcphe.org)