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| **Cetirizine (Zyrtec) – capsules, tablets, solution, chewable, disintegrating tablet** |
| **Indication (reason for use)** | **Age** | **Starting Dose**  |
| **Perennial Allergies/Rhinitis/Hay Fever** | 6- 12 months | 2.5mg by mouth once daily |
|  | 12-23 months | 2.5mg by mouth once daily  |
|  | 2-5 years | 2.5mg by mouth once daily (can increase to 2.5mg twice daily or 5mg once daily if symptoms persist) |
|  | 6 years and older | 5mg by mouth once daily (can increase to 10mg if symptoms persist) |
| **Urticaria (hives)** | 6 months – 5 years | 2.5mg by mouth every 24 hours |
|  | 6-11 years | 5mg by mouth every 24 hours (can increase to 10mg for severe symptoms) |
|  | 12 years and older | 10mg by mouth every 24 hours |

Chart compiled by PharmDToYou, LLC

Facts:

1. Cetirizine (Zyrtec) is an allergy medication that can be used for children as young as 6 months old.
2. Many formulations are available (see table) and typically inexpensive.
3. The most common side effects include drowsiness (2-4% in children) and headache (10% in children).
4. You can typically see changes in symptoms within 20-60 minutes (especially hives).

Important Notes

1. You do not need to use the brand name Zyrtec to get the full effect.
2. Watch the solution concentration – it is usually 5mg/5mL so for a 5mg dose you use 5mL. For a 2.5mg dose you use 2.5mL and for a 10mg dose, use 10mL.
3. Do not use a teaspoon, use an oral syringe or dosing cup for accurate dosage.
4. Call your pharmacist or physician if your child is suffering from one of these indications but is less than 6 months old.

Reference: Cetirizine. Lexi-Drugs. Lexicomp. Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc. Riverwoods, IL.  Available at:  http://online.lexi.com.  Accessed August 19, 2020.