

Beta-Adrenergic Blocking Agents

Generic	Brand
Atenolol	Tenormin
Metoprolol	Lopressor
Nadolol	Corgard
Timolol	Blocadren
Pindolol	Viskin
Propranolol	Inderal
Acebutolol	Sectral
Labetalol	Trandate

It is important to take this medicine at the same time(s) each day.

Description

The medicines listed above are known as beta-adrenergic blocking agents, commonly called beta blockers. They work by controlling certain nerve impulses which reduce the heart's work load. This protects your heart by decreasing its demand for blood and oxygen. Beta blockers are used to treat high blood pressure and angina (heart pain). These drugs are known to reduce high blood pressure related deaths. They help prevent further heart attacks when used by cardiac patients. Beta blockers have been found useful in correcting irregular heart rates and preventing migraine headaches. They are also used for other conditions.

Dosage & Administration

For this medication to work, it must be taken as directed. Take this medicine with or right after meals unless your doctor tells you to take it on empty stomach. It is important to take this medicine at the same time(s) each day.

Missed Dose

If you miss a dose of this medicine, take the missed dose as soon as possible. However, if the next scheduled dose is within 8 hours, do not take the missed dose at all. **Do not double the dose.** Instead, go back to your regular dosing schedule. If you have any questions about this, check with your doctor.

Side Effects

Most side effects are mild and short term, and rarely require a change in your prescription.

It is always a good practice to check with your doctor as soon as possible if you note any of the following:

Most Common

- dizziness or lightheadedness
- unusual tiredness or weakness

Less Common

- slow pulse (less than 50 beats per minute)
- numbness or tingling of fingers or toes
- colds hands or feet
- wheezing or shortness of breath
- mental confusion or depression
- reduced alertness
- swelling of ankles, feet or lower legs
- anxiety or nervousness
- decreased sexual ability
- headache
- diarrhea
- insomnia

Rare

- constipation
- nausea
- fever or sore throat
- skin rash
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- dryness of eyes, mouth or skin

Special Instructions

It is important that your doctor check your progress at regular visits. This is to make sure that the medicine is working for you.

Do not stop taking this medicine without first checking with your doctor. Some conditions may become worse if your medicine is stopped suddenly. Your doctor may want to reduce the amount gradually.

Ask your doctor about taking your pulse rate before and after taking your medicine. Then, while you are taking this medicine, check your pulse as suggested by your doctor. If it is much slower than your usual rate (or less than 50 beats per minute), check with your doctor. A pulse rate that is too slow may cause circulation problems.

Beta blockers may cause some people to become dizzy, drowsy, lightheaded or less alert than normal. Make sure you know how to react to this medicine before you drive, use machines, or do other jobs that require you to be alert.

Tell your doctor if you have diabetes or thyroid disease. Beta blockers can cover up the signs of low blood sugar and of high thyroid activity.

Beta blockers can make you more sensitive to cold. They tend to decrease blood flow to the skin, fingers and toes. Dress warmly during cold weather and be careful during prolonged exposure to cold, as in winter sports.

Chest pain resulting from exercise is often reduced or prevented by beta blockers. This may tempt a patient to become overly active. Ask your doctor for specific exercise guidelines for your condition.

Do not take beta blockers with other medications unless they have been discussed with your doctor. This includes over-the-counter medicines such as nasal decongestants and cough/cold preparations.

Store this medicine away from heat and direct light. The medicine cabinet in your bathroom is not a good place because of heat and moisture there.

Keep this and all medicines out of the reach of children

If you have any questions about beta blockers or any other medicine, check with your doctor or pharmacist.

*Developed by:
Department of Pharmacy*