



Patient & Family Guide
2017

Beta Blockers



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Beta Blockers

Why do I need this medicine?

Beta blockers help your heart to beat at a slower, steadier rate so it doesn't have to work as hard. They can be used to treat high blood pressure, angina (chest pain), and/or to lower the risk of repeated heart attacks.

Examples:

- › Metoprolol (Lopressor[®], Betaloc[®])
- › Atenolol (Tenormin[®])
- › Carvedilol (Coreg[®])
- › Acebutolol (Sectral[®], Monitan[®])
- › Bisoprolol (Monacor[®])
- › Nadolol (Corgard[®])

My medicine is called: _____

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

How to take this medicine

- Take this medicine exactly as directed. Even if you feel fine, your blood pressure can still be high.
- Most beta blockers can be taken with or without food, but if you are taking carvedilol (Coreg®), take it with food.
- Take it at the same time(s) each day.

How to store this medicine

- Store your medicine in a tightly closed container at room temperature (15-30 °C) away from heat, moisture, and direct light. Do not store it in the bathroom.
- Keep all medicine out of the reach of children and pets.

If you miss a dose

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember.
- Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose.
- Do not take two doses at the same time.

Medicines and foods to avoid

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines, including over-the-counter products.
- Your doctor or dietitian may suggest a low-salt diet.

Warnings

Check with your doctor before taking a beta blocker if you have:

- › Emphysema
- › Asthma
- › Bronchitis
- › Heart disease
- › Thyroid disorders
- › Raynaud's disease
- › Diabetes

- **Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly. You may need to take smaller doses before stopping this medicine completely.**
- This medicine may change the level of sugar in your blood and cover up the symptoms of very low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). If you have diabetes, you may need to measure your blood sugar more carefully and tell your doctor if you see any noticeable changes.
- This medicine may make you light-headed. To keep from getting dizzy, do not stand up suddenly, stand for long periods, exercise in hot weather, or take long, hot showers.
- You could be more sensitive to cold weather.
- Tell your doctor or dentist about all the medicines you are taking before having any type of surgery.

Call your doctor right away or go to the Emergency Department if you have:

- › Slow or irregular heartbeat
- › Chest pain that lasts longer than 15 minutes
- › Wheezing
- › Trouble breathing
- › Fainting
- › Extreme (very bad) dizziness
- › Swelling in your legs or ankles

If you have any of these less serious side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist:

- › Dizziness
- › Depressed mood
- › Drowsiness
- › Trouble having sex
- › Trouble sleeping
- › Cold hands and feet
- › Strange dreams or nightmares
- › Numbness in your fingers or toes
- › Weakness

If you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor.

Notes:

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>

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Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

Nova Scotia Health Authority

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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.