

Fluticasone/Salmeterol Inhalation (Advair®)



Asthma Education Clinic

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www.bcchildrens.ca

What is fluticasone/salmeterol?

Fluticasone/salmeterol is a combination of two medications, fluticasone and salmeterol. The brand name for this medicine is Advair®. It used for long-term control of asthma symptoms.

Fluticasone is an inhaled corticosteroid, commonly referred to as an inhaled “steroid”. It reduces the inflammation in the airways of the lungs.

Salmeterol is a long-acting bronchodilator. Bronchodilators work by relaxing the muscles around the airways of the lung. Long-acting means that it will keep the airways relaxed and open for up to 12 hours.

The combination of these two medicines works to prevent your child from having an asthma attack. Fluticasone/salmeterol is given through a metered-dose inhaler (MDI or “puffer”) or a dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).

Special instructions

- ▶ Fluticasone/salmeterol is used to prevent an asthma attack. We call it a “preventer” medicine. It is important that your child takes fluticasone/salmeterol regularly as prescribed even when he or she is not having symptoms and looks well.
- ▶ Do not stop using unless told to do so by your child’s doctor.
- ▶ Fluticasone/salmeterol should not be used for quick relief of your child’s asthma attack. If your child is having an asthma attack, you should give a “reliever” medicine (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline).
- ▶ Shake the MDI inhaler well before use.
- ▶ It is strongly recommended that your child use a spacer with the MDI inhaler. Using a spacer with a MDI inhaler is very important to help get the medicine into the lungs and work better.
- ▶ Do not shake the dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).
- ▶ Rinse mouth out with water and spit after each use. If your child is too young to spit, simply have him or her take a drink of water. If your child uses a spacer with mask, gently wipe your child’s face with a wet washcloth after each use.
- ▶ It may take a few weeks for this medicine to work.

- ▶ Non medicinal ingredient: lactose.
- ▶ Keep this medicine out of the reach of children.
- ▶ Read and follow all instructions provided with inhaler. Using this medicine the correct way is very important. Ask your child’s doctor, pharmacist, or certified asthma educator if you have any questions about how to use the inhaler. You must use this medicine correctly for the medicine to work as it was intended.

Dose counting

Keep track of how many doses of your child’s medicine are remaining and get a new prescription before it runs out.

Dry-powder inhaler

The dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®) has a dose counter which tells you the number of doses remaining. It counts down from 60 to 1. The numbers appear in red when the last five doses have been reached. Get a new inhaler before the last 5 doses have been reached.

Metered-dose inhaler

The metered-dose inhaler (MDI or “puffer”) also has a dose counter.

Before your child uses the MDI for the first time:

1. remove the mouthpiece cover
2. shake the inhaler well and release a puff into the air
3. repeat until the counter reads 120 to make sure that it works.

If the MDI has not been used for a week or more:

1. remove the mouthpiece cover
2. shake the inhaler well and release a puff into the air
3. repeat for a second puff.

Each time the inhaler is pushed down, the number on the counter will count down. You should get a replacement when the counter shows the number 020. The counter will stop at 000 when all the recommended puffs have been used, you should stop using the inhaler at that time and discard it.

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If you miss a dose

- ▶ If you miss a dose or forget to give this medicine, give it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for the next dose, then skip the missed dose. Do not give extra medicine to make up for the missed dose. If you are unsure what to do about a missed dose, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Common side effects

Call your child's doctor if the following effects continue or are bothersome:

- ▶ Hoarseness or sore throat
- ▶ Yeast infections in the mouth (white spots), known as thrush
- ▶ Irregular heartbeats
- ▶ Fast heart rate
- ▶ Nervousness
- ▶ Tremor
- ▶ Inability to sleep

Warning signs

Call your child's doctor immediately if your child:

- ▶ Does not respond to his/her asthma "reliever" or "rescue" medicine (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline).
 - ▶ Seems to need more frequent use of asthma "reliever" or "rescue" medication.
 - ▶ Develops worsening symptoms of asthma.
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Contact us

If you need any additional information about this medicine or your child's asthma, call the Asthma Educators at BC Children's Hospital at 604-875-2345 local 7461.

This resource was created for British Columbia's Children's Hospital (BCCH) with references from:

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
www.cincinnatichildrens.org

Canadian Lung Association at www.lung.ca

Children's Hospital Education Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba at www.wch.ca

For more information on asthma, contact the BC Children's Hospital Family Resource Library at:

Tel: (604) 875-2345 Local 5102

Out of Vancouver: 1-800-331-1533 local 2

Fax: (604) 875-3455

Email: famreslib@cw.bc.ca

www.bcchildrens.ca/frl