



## ... Salbutamol Inhalation

(sal-BYOO-ta-mole)

Salbutamol (Ventolin®, Apo-Salvent®, Ratio-salbutamol®, other) is a quick-relief medicine for wheezing and other symptoms of asthma. It works by relaxing the muscles surrounding the airways of the lungs. Salbutamol is sometimes given prior to exercise to prevent asthma symptoms. Salbutamol is given to your child either through an aerosol machine (nebulizer or compressor), a metered-dose inhaler (MDI or “puffer”) or a dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).

### Special instructions

- Salbutamol is used as needed for quick relief of symptoms. The effects of salbutamol last approximately 4 hours. Use as directed by your child's doctor.
- Shake the MDI inhaler well before use. Do not shake the dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).
- 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.
- Make sure you refill this prescription before you run out of medication.
- If you notice that your child needs to use the inhaler more often than usual, you should talk with your child's doctor. If a child's asthma is well controlled, Salbutamol should only be needed for mild, infrequent flare ups. If a child is using or needing Salbutamol on a regular basis outside of colds or flare ups, see your doctor to have their asthma control assessed.
- The most common reasons for poor asthma control include: not taking your medication properly, forgetting to take your controller medication daily or using an empty inhaler.
- Keep this medication 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 using the inhaler or nebulizer machine.

- Salbutamol dry powder inhaler only: lactose is a non medicinal ingredient so inform your child's doctor if your child is lactose intolerant

### Dose counting

- It is important that you keep track of how many doses of your child's medication are remaining and obtain a new prescription before it runs out.
- The metered-dose inhaler (MDI) does not have a dose counter. It is important that you keep track of how many doses have been used on a calendar or by another other convenient method. Obtain a new inhaler when there are 20 doses remaining. The MDI will still make a sound when you shake it even if it is empty because there will be propellant left. Discard the inhaler when it is empty.
- 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. Obtain a new inhaler before the last 5 doses have been reached.

### Tips for parents

If you miss a dose or forget to give this medication, 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 medication to make up for the missed dose. **If you are unsure what to do about a missed dose, contact your health care provider or pharmacist.**



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### Common side effects

Call your child's health care provider if the following effects continue or are bothersome:

- Fast heart rate
- Nervousness
- Tremor
- Inability to sleep
- Headache
- Shakiness

### Warning signs

Call your child's health care provider immediately if your child:

- Needs this medicine more often than prescribed
- Is not helped by taking this medicine
- Experiences sudden worsening of shortness of breath and wheezing shortly after taking this medication
- Does not experience relief for at least 3 hours

### Contact us

For additional information on this or any Health Topic, please contact the Family Support and Resource Centre ([www.bcchildrens.ca/frl](http://www.bcchildrens.ca/frl)), or your pediatrician.

References from:

- The Children's Asthma Education Centre: [www.asthma-education.com](http://www.asthma-education.com)
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center: [www.cincinnatichildrens.org](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org)
- The Asthma Society of Canada: [www.asthma.ca](http://www.asthma.ca)
- Canadian Lung Association: [www.lung.ca](http://www.lung.ca)

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