

Budesonide/formoterol Inhalation (Symbicort®)



Asthma Education Clinic

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www.bcchildrens.ca

What is budesonide/formoterol?

Budesonide/formoterol is a combination of two medications, budesonide and formoterol. The brand name for this medicine is called Symbicort®. It is used for the long-term control of asthma symptoms. Budesonide is an inhaled corticosteroid, commonly referred to as an inhaled “steroid”. It reduces the inflammation in the airways of the lungs.

Formoterol 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 work to prevent your child from having an asthma attack. Budesonide/formoterol is given through a dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®).

Special instructions

- ▶ Budesonide/formoterol is used to prevent an asthma attack. We call it a “preventer” medicine. It is important that your child takes budesonide/formoterol 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.
- ▶ Budesonide/formoterol should not be used for quick relief of your child’s asthma attack unless otherwise directed by your child’s doctor. If your child is having an asthma attack, you should give a “reliever” medication (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline)
- ▶ Do not shake the dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®) before using.
- ▶ Rinse your child’s mouth out with water and have him or her spit after each use.
- ▶ It may take a few weeks for this medicine to work.
- ▶ Keep this medication out of the reach of children.
- ▶ Read and follow all instructions provided with inhaler. 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 remain and get a new prescription before it runs out.

The dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®) has a dose indicator. The dose indicator tells you how many doses are left in the inhaler. The dose indicator moves slowly each time you load a dose. Every 20th dose is marked with a number and every 10th dose is marked with a dash. When the “0” on the red background has reached the middle of the window you should discard it.

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 medication 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