

Salmeterol Inhalation (Serevent®)

(sal-MEH-tuhr-all)



Asthma Education Clinic

4480 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V4

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www.bcchildrens.ca

What is salmeterol?

Salmeterol is a long-acting bronchodilator. The brand name for this medicine is called Serevent®. Bronchodilators work by relaxing the muscles around the airways of the lungs. Long-acting means that it will keep the airways relaxed and open for up to 12 hours. It is sometimes given before exercise to prevent exercise-induced asthma symptoms.

When used for the long-term control of asthma, salmeterol must be used with inhaled corticosteroids. Salmeterol works together with inhaled corticosteroids to control asthma symptoms when taken regularly. Salmeterol is given through a dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).

Special instructions

- ▶ Salmeterol is used with inhaled corticosteroids to prevent an asthma attack. We call it a “preventer” medicine. It is important that your child takes 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.
- ▶ 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” medication (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline)
- ▶ Salmeterol is not a substitute for inhaled corticosteroids (eg. fluticasone or budesonide). Do not change the dosage of these medicines. Do not stop these medicines without talking to your child’s doctor even if he or she feels better after starting salmeterol.
- ▶ Do not shake the dry-powder inhaler (Diskus®).
- ▶ The non-medicinal ingredient is lactose, so talk to your doctor if your child is lactose intolerant.
- ▶ 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 remain and get a new prescription before it runs out.

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.

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:

- ▶ Irregular heartbeats
- ▶ Fast heart rate
- ▶ Nervousness
- ▶ Tremor
- ▶ Inability to sleep

continued...

Warning signs

Call your child's doctor immediately if your child:

- ▶ Does not respond to his/her asthma "reliever" or "rescue" medication (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline).
 - ▶ Seems to require 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