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## Taking a Beta-Blocker

A beta-blocker decreases your heart's workload and helps it beat more regularly. It can also help increase your heart's pumping ability. This can reduce chest pain. It may also lower your blood pressure. This medicine is sometimes used to treat other medical problems such as high blood pressure and irregular heart rhythms.



The name of my beta-blocker is: \_\_\_\_\_

I'm taking it for: \_\_\_\_\_

### Medicine tips

- Read the fact sheet that comes with your medicine. Ask for a sheet if you don't get one.
- Take your beta-blocker exactly as directed. Follow the directions on the label.
- Take your medicine at the same time or times every day.
- If you take a long-acting tablet or capsule, swallow it whole. Don't chew it, crush it, or break it open unless you are told it's OK to do so.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember — unless it's almost time for your next dose. If so, skip the missed dose. Don't take a double dose.

### For your safety

- Tell any healthcare provider you have (including your pharmacist) before taking any other prescription or over-the-counter medicines. This includes vitamin supplements and herbal remedies.
- Don't stop taking your beta-blocker unless your healthcare provider tells you to. Doing so can make your condition worse. When it is time to stop, follow your healthcare provider's instructions.
- Don't drive or operate heavy machinery unless you are sure your beta-blocker doesn't make you sleepy or dizzy.
- To prevent dizziness, get up slowly after sitting or lying down.

- Ask your healthcare provider to check your pulse rate before and after taking your beta-blocker.

## Possible side effects

Along with their intended effects, medicine can have unwanted side effects. These effects may go away as your body adjusts to the medicine. Possible side effects of beta-blockers include:

- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Tiredness, drowsiness, or weakness
- Sexual dysfunction
- Trouble sleeping
- Mood changes or depression
- Fainting
- Slow heartbeat
- Low blood pressure

Talk to your healthcare provider if you have side effects that bother you or don't go away.

## When to seek medical advice

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these:

- Wheezing or trouble breathing
- Fainting
- Chest pain or a slow or irregular heartbeat
- Swelling in your lower legs or feet
- Yellowing skin or eyes
- Numbness or tingling
- Skin rash or itching

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