



Atenolol for hypertension

This leaflet is about the use of atenolol for high blood pressure (which is also called hypertension).

This leaflet has been written for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adult patients. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Atenolol can trigger asthma. You must tell your doctor if your child has ever had asthma or wheezy chest episodes, **before** giving atenolol.

Do not stop giving atenolol suddenly, as this may cause your child's blood pressure to rise dangerously high.

Name of drug

Atenolol

Brand names: Tenormin®

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

High blood pressure (hypertension) can lead to damage to internal organs. Atenolol is a medicine called a beta blocker. It opens up blood vessels and slows the heart so that it pumps less forcefully, which help to lower the blood pressure.

What is atenolol available as?

- **Tablets:** 25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg
- **Liquid medicine:** 25 mg in 5 mL

When should I give atenolol?

Atenolol is usually given **once** each day.

If your child is taking more than one medicine to reduce their blood pressure, your doctor may suggest that they take the different medicines at different times of the day. Your doctor will help you plan this.

Give the medicine at about the same time each day so that this becomes part of your child's daily routine, which will help you to remember.

How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of atenolol (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

Your doctor will start the medicine at a low dose then gradually increase it until your child's blood pressure is at the right level.

 **It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.**

How should I give it?



Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablet. You can crush the tablet and mix it

with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, jam or mashed potato. Make sure your child swallows it straight away, without chewing.



Liquid medicine: Measure out the right amount using a medicine spoon or oral syringe. You can get these from your pharmacist. Do not use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.

When should the medicine start working?

Your child's blood pressure will start to come down after a few days, although you will not see any difference in your child.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of atenolol, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of atenolol, you **do not** need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

If your child is sick again, seek advice from your GP, pharmacist or hospital. They will decide what to do based on your child's condition and the specific medicine involved.

What if I forget to give it?

Give the missed dose when you remember during the day, as long as this is at least 12 hours before the next dose is due. You do not need to wake up a sleeping child to give a missed dose.

 Never give a double dose of atenolol.

What if I give too much?

 It may be dangerous to give an extra dose of atenolol because it may make your child's blood pressure too low.

If you think you may have given your child too much atenolol, contact your doctor, as they may want to check your child's blood pressure and blood sugar level.



If your child feels faint or dizzy, cold and sweaty, or has a weak or rapid heart rate (they may feel as though their heart is racing or fluttering), or they begin to breathe quickly, contact your doctor or take your child to hospital **straight away**.

Have the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. Have the medicine packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don't want (side-effects).

Side-effects you must do something about



If your child is short of breath or wheezy after taking atenolol, take them to hospital or call an ambulance **straight away**, as it may have triggered an asthma attack.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may feel dizzy or light-headed when they stand up, or may faint. Encourage them to stand up slowly, and to sit or lie down if they feel dizzy or light-headed. If this happens often, contact your doctor to check your child's blood pressure and blood sugar level, as it may be too low.
- Your child may say that their heart is beating slowly.
- Your child's hands and feet may feel cold. This is nothing to worry about. If their hands and feet hurt, contact your doctor for advice.
- Your child may feel sick or be sick (vomit) when they first start taking atenolol. Giving the medicine with some food may help. If this is still a problem after a week, contact your doctor for advice.
- Your child may feel physically tired and they may have difficulty getting to sleep or nightmares.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side-effects to a UK safety scheme at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard>.

More information on side-effects can be found in the following leaflet <http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/side-effects-childrens-medicines>

Can other medicines be given at the same time as atenolol?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Atenolol should not be taken with some other medicines that you get on prescription. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking before starting atenolol.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist **before** giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complementary medicines.

Is there anything else I need to know about atenolol?



Atenolol can sometimes worsen asthma. You must tell your doctor if your child has ever had asthma or wheezy chest episodes.



Atenolol can slow the heart rate, and therefore, some types of slow heart rhythm disorders can get worse. You must tell your doctor if your child has any heart or heart rhythm problems.

- Your doctor will check your child's blood pressure and pulse rate regularly while taking atenolol.

General advice about medicines

- Try to give the medicine at about the same times each day, to help you remember.
- Only give this medicine to *your* child. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.



If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor straight away.

- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.
- Keep the medicine in the container it came in.

Who to contact for more information

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about atenolol and about other medicines used to treat high blood pressure.

You can also get useful information from:

England

NHS 111: 111 - www.nhs.uk

Scotland

NHS 24: 111 - www.nhs24.com

Wales/Galw Lechyd Cymru

NHS Direct: 0845 4647 - www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland

NI Direct: www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk



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The primary source for the information in this leaflet is the British National Formulary for Children. For details on any other sources used for this leaflet, please contact us through our website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

We take great care to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct and up-to-date. However, medicines can be used in different ways for different patients. It is important that you ask the advice of your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about something. This leaflet is about the use of these medicines in the UK, and may not apply to other countries. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), the Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacists Group (NPPG), WellChild and the contributors and editors cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of information, omissions of information, or any actions that may be taken as a consequence of reading this leaflet.