

Labetalol hydrochloride for high blood pressure

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



This leaflet is 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 adults. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Name of drug

Labetalol hydrochloride; also referred to as labetalol

Brand name: Trandate

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

High blood pressure can lead to damage to internal organs. Labetalol is in a group of medicines called beta blockers, which help to lower blood pressure. It opens up blood vessels and slows the heart down so that it pumps less forcefully.

What is labetalol available as?

- **Tablets:** 50 mg, 100 mg, 200 mg and 400 mg
- **Liquid medicine** can be ordered specially from your pharmacist

When should I give labetalol?

Labetalol is usually given **three or four** times each day. Your doctor will tell you how often to give it.


- **Three times each day:** this should be once in the morning, once in the early afternoon, and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are at least 6 hours apart, for example 8 am, 2 pm and 8 pm.
- **Four times each day:** this should be first thing in the morning, at about midday, late in the afternoon and at bedtime. Ideally, these times should be at least 4 hours apart, for example 8 am, midday, 4 pm and 8 pm.

Give the medicine at about the same time(s) 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 labetalol (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, honey or jam. Make sure your child swallows it straight away without chewing.



Liquid medicine: Measure out the right amount using an oral syringe or medicine spoon. 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 labetalol, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of labetalol, you **do not** need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

What if I forget to give it?

Do not give the missed dose. Just give the next dose as usual.



Never give a double dose of labetalol.

What if I give too much?

It can be dangerous to give too much labetalol because it may make your child's blood pressure too low. If you think you may have given your child too much labetalol, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet) or take your child to hospital.

Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. Have the medicine or 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 labetalol, take them to hospital or call an ambulance **straight away** as it may have triggered an asthma attack.



If your child starts being sick every few hours, has stomach pains, is very sleepy or has jaundice (the skin or eyes look yellow), contact your doctor or take your child to hospital **straight away**, as there may be a problem with your child's liver.

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 take their time standing up, for at least 30 minutes after taking labetalol, and to sit or lie down if they feel dizzy or light-headed.

If this happens too often, contact your doctor to check your child's blood pressure, as it may be too low.

- They may feel physically tired or weak and may have difficulty getting to sleep or nightmares.

Your child may also get some of the following side-effects when they first start taking labetalol. If they are still a problem after one week or you are worried, contact your doctor but continue to give labetalol.


- They may have a headache or a tingling sensation on their scalp.
- They may say their heart is beating slowly.
- Their hands and feet may feel cold. If their hands or feet hurt contact your doctor for advice.
- They may feel sick (nausea) or be sick (vomit). Giving the medicine with some food or milk may help.
- They may have difficulty in urinating (doing a wee).

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor.

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

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Labetalol should not be taken with some common drugs that you get on prescription. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking before giving labetalol.
- 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 this medicine?

 Labetalol can trigger an asthma attack. You must tell your doctor if your child has ever had asthma or wheezy chest episodes.

- Your doctor will check your child's blood pressure and pulse rate regularly while they are taking labetalol. They will also test their blood to make sure labetalol has not affected their liver.

General advice about medicines

- Try to give medicines at about the same times each day, to help you remember.
- If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your doctor but continue to give the medicine as usual in the meantime. Do not give extra doses as you may do harm.
- 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 for advice.

- 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.
- You may need to keep liquid medicine in the fridge – check the instructions on the bottle. Make sure the medicine doesn't freeze.
- 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 child's doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about labetalol and about other medicines used to treat hypertension.

You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111

Tel 111

www.nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111

www.nhs24.scot

Wales: NHS 111 Wales

Tel 111

www.111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct

www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk