



# Formoterol inhaler for asthma

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.

- If your child has an acute asthma attack (sudden onset of wheezing and breathlessness) – use their reliever medicine (usually a blue salbutamol inhaler).
- Formoterol inhaler should be used every day together with an inhaled steroid.


## Name of medicine

### Formoterol

**Brand names:** Atimos Modulite, Foradil, Formoterol Easyhaler, Oxis Turbohaler

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

Formoterol helps to prevent asthma and wheeze. It is important that your child takes formoterol every day together with their inhaled steroids. This may be in separate inhalers or from one inhaler that contains both medicines.

 If your child has wheezing or shortness of breath during an asthma attack, they should use their reliever inhaler (usually a blue salbutamol inhaler)

## What is formoterol available as?

Formoterol must be breathed into the airways in the lungs to work. This is done using an inhaler, usually with a spacer device. Dry powder inhalers may be provided for older children; these do not need a spacer device.

- Atimos modulite: 12 micrograms per dose (puff)
- Foradil: 12 micrograms per dose
- Formoterol Easyhaler (dry powder inhaler): 12 micrograms per dose
- Oxis Turbohaler: 6 or 12 micrograms per dose

Your doctor may suggest that your child uses an inhaler that contains both formoterol and a steroid together rather than separate inhalers. You can ask your doctor about this option if you think it would be useful to make sure your child takes both medicines regularly.

## When should I give formoterol?

Formoterol is usually given **twice** each day, once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are 10–12 hours apart, for example some time between 7 and 8 am and then between 7 and 9 pm.


Oxis Turbohaler may be given **once or twice** a day. Your doctor will tell you how often to give it.

If it is to be given once each day, this can be in the morning or the evening.

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 medicine (the dose) that is right for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

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

## How should I give it?

Your doctor or asthma nurse will show you and your child how to use the inhaler and spacer device. Details on how to use inhalers can be found [on our website](#).

 It is important that the inhaler is used correctly, to make sure the medicine gets into the lungs. If you are not sure you are using it correctly, ask your nurse or pharmacist to check.

## When should the medicine start to work?

Formoterol needs to be given regularly with your child's steroid medicine to help prevent asthma and wheeze. It does not work straight away but your child should start to wheeze less and to need less reliever medicine (blue inhaler) within a week of starting treatment.

Continue to give the medicine your doctor or nurse has told you to, even if your child does not have any wheeze or symptoms of asthma, as it works to prevent symptoms.


If your child's asthma does not seem to be getting any better and they still need to use their reliever medicine often, contact your doctor or nurse.

## What if my child is sick (vomits)?

You do not need to worry if your child is sick, as the medicine will still work.

## What if I forget to give it?

If you remember up to 4 hours after you should have given a dose, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at about 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

 Never give a double dose of formoterol, unless your doctor has told you to.

## What if I think I have given too much?

You are unlikely to do harm if you give an extra dose of formoterol by mistake. If you are concerned that you may have given too much, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet). Have the inhaler 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 cause effects that we don't want (side-effects).

### Side-effects you must do something about



If your child has an irregular or fast heart beat (they may say their heart feels fluttery or is racing), contact your doctor straight away.

### Other side-effects you need to know about

Your child may get some of the following side-effects when they first start taking formoterol. These are usually mild and should wear off after a few days as your child's body gets used to the medicine. If the side-effects are still a problem after 2 weeks or you are worried, contact your doctor but continue to give formoterol as usual.

- Your child may feel dizzy or light-headed when they stand up. Encourage them to stand up slowly, and to sit or lie down if they feel dizzy or lightheaded.
- Your child may get headaches, have mild tremor (shakiness), especially in the hands, or have joint or muscle pain or cramps.
- Some children may become more nervous or anxious than usual, and they may have disturbed sleep. If this happens, give the medicine earlier in the evening.
- Your child may feel sick or be sick (vomit). If this is still a problem after a week, contact your doctor.

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 [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard).

More information on side-effects can be found in a [leaflet](#) on our website.

### Can other medicines be given at the same time as formoterol?

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

### Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?

- It is important that your child continues to take their inhaled steroids as usual while taking formoterol (unless you have an inhaler containing both medicines).
- Your child should rinse their mouth out thoroughly with water or clean their teeth after using the inhaler.
- Clean the spacer at least once a month in warm soapy water and leave it to drip dry. This will prevent medicine residue from building up on the inside of the device.
- Do not use a cloth to dry the spacer, as this will cause a build up of static and it may not work properly.
- It is important to keep track of how many puffs of inhaler your child has used, because the medicine will run out before the gas (propellant) that drives the medicine into the airways. This means that they may not be getting any medicine (you can read more on our website [here](#)).
- Take old inhalers to your pharmacy – do not put them in the household waste or recycling.

### 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.
- 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. Take old medicines to your pharmacy.

### 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 formoterol and other medicines used to treat asthma and wheeze. You can also get useful information from:

**England: NHS 111** Tel 111 [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
**Scotland: NHS 24** Tel 111 [www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)  
**Wales: NHS 111 Wales** Tel 111 [www.111.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.111.wales.nhs.uk)  
**Northern Ireland: NI Direct** [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)  
**Asthma + Lung UK** 0300 222 5800 [Asthmaandlung.org.uk](http://Asthmaandlung.org.uk)

[www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)