

Ipratropium bromide 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.

Name of medicine

Ipratropium bromide

Brand names: Atrovent, Inhalvent

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

Ipratropium bromide belongs to a group of medicines called bronchodilators. It relaxes the muscles in the lungs and makes the airways wider, making it easier to breathe. It is usually taken regularly to help prevent asthma attacks. Sometimes it is recommended as an alternative to salbutamol as a reliever (for use during an asthma attack).

What is ipratropium bromide available as?

CFC-free inhaler: 20 microgram per dose (puff)

When should I give ipratropium bromide?

Ipratropium bromide is usually given **three or four times each day**.

- If it is to be given three times each day, these times should be 4–6 hours apart, depending on what time your child wakes up and goes to bed. For example, this could be between 7 am and 8 am, at about midday, and between 7 pm and 8 pm.
- If it is to be given four times each day, these times should be 3–4 hours apart, depending on what time your child wakes up and goes to bed. For example, this could be between 7 am and 8 am, between 10 am and midday, between 3 pm and 4 pm and between 7 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 medicine (the dose) that is right for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label and in your asthma plan.

How should I give it?

Ipratropium is given by inhaler. 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](#). Video on how to use inhalers can be found on the Asthma + Lung website (details at end of leaflet).

 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?

Ipratropium bromide needs to be given regularly 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 after starting treatment.

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

If your child has been given ipratropium to use as a reliever during an asthma attack it can take longer to work than salbutamol.

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?

You do not need to give the missed dose. Give the next dose as normal.

What if I think I have given too much?

You are unlikely to do harm if your child has an extra dose by mistake.

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).

Because ipratropium is inhaled, very little gets into the rest of the body, so side-effects are unlikely.

Side-effects you must do something about

Contact your doctor straightaway if your child has any of the following:

- blurred vision, red eyes, or rings around lights – these can be signs of high pressure in the eye
- difficulty weeing
- a faster heartbeat or their heart feels fluttery
- difficulty swallowing.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may have a dry mouth. Eating citrus fruits (e.g. oranges) and taking sips of water may help.
- They may have a cough, headache or feel dizzy.
- They may get constipation (difficulty doing a poo) or nausea (feeling sick).

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 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 ipratropium bromide?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- ipratropium bromide 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 ipratropium bromide.
- 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 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. Information on how to keep track can be found on our website [here](#)). Some inhalers have counters which show when they are no longer usable.
- Take old inhalers to your local pharmacy— do not put them in the household waste or recycling because they contain gases that may be harmful to the environment.

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.

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- 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 a doctor or NHS local services (details at end of leaflet).
- 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 ipratropium bromide and about other medicines used to treat asthma.

You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111

Tel 111 nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111 nhs24.scot

Wales: NHS 111 Wales

Tel 111 111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct

nidirect.gov.uk

Asthma + Lung UK

0300 222 5800 Asthma.org.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk