



BETA-BLOCKERS

Atenolol
Metoprolol

Bisoprolol
Nadolol

Carvedilol
Propranolol



What does this medication do?

Beta-blockers **make your heart relax** by blocking the effects of stress hormones, which **lowers your heart rate (pulse) and blood pressure**. This protects your heart and allows it to beat more effectively.

Beta-blockers may be used for:

- **Protection against heart pain (angina) and abnormal heartbeats**
- **Improved heart muscle recovery** after a heart attack

In people with a weakened heart muscle (heart failure), beta-blockers **preserve heart function** and help the heart get stronger.

How should you take this medication?

- **Take this medication as directed.** Try and take it at the same time(s) each day.
- If you take it more than once a day, space it out evenly throughout the day.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for your next dose. **DO NOT** take an extra dose to make up for the missed dose.
- Continue to take this medication even if you feel well.
- **DO NOT** stop taking this medication without your healthcare provider's advice.
- This medication may be taken with or without food.

What side effects may occur?

Because this medication lowers your blood pressure, you may feel **dizzy** or **lightheaded**, like you might **fall**.

If you experience this feeling, **sit or lie down right away**.

To lower your risk of feeling dizzy or falling:

- Walk slowly up and down stairs
- Change body positions slowly, especially when standing up or getting out bed
- Dangle your feet over the edge of the bed before getting out of bed



Other side effects may include:

- Cool hands and feet that are more sensitive to the cold
- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Decreased sexual ability

If you have diabetes and take a beta-blocker, **watch your blood sugars closely**. It may be harder to notice the signs of low blood sugar such as a faster heart rate (pulse) or feeling shaky.

- Dizziness and sweating will not be affected by beta-blockers and can still be used as signs of low blood sugar

This medication may lower your heart rate (pulse). It is a good idea to **check your pulse often**, especially when the drug is new or when your dose has changed. Ask your healthcare provider about how to check your pulse, how often to check it, and when you should be concerned.

When to contact your healthcare provider:

- Your heart rate (pulse) falls below 50 beats per minute
- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Unusual swelling of feet and ankles
- Depression, nightmares, headaches
- If you experience other side effects that are bothersome

Talk to your pharmacist or other healthcare provider to make sure your medications do not interact with your beta-blocker (including vitamins, over-the-counter medications, and herbal products).