

## BETA-BLOCKERS

atenolol, celiprolol, metoprolol, nadolol,  
pindolol, propranolol, sotalol, timolol



**Other names:** AFT-Metoprolol CR, Apo-Nadolol®, Apo-Timol®, Apo-Pindolol®, Atenolol®, Betaloc CR®, Cardinol®, Cardinol LA®, Celol®, Lopressor®, Myloc CR®, Pacific Atenolol®, Slow Lopressor®

**Important note:** The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

### Why you are taking this medicine?

Beta-blockers are a group of medicines that slow down the heart and decrease the amount of work the heart has to do. They also have extra properties, for example in the eye they can cause a reduction in intraocular pressure and so treat glaucoma.

Beta-blockers can be used for the following conditions:

- to prevent angina (chest pain)
- to reduce the risk of a further heart attack
- to control certain abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias)
- to treat heart failure
- to lower blood pressure
- to prevent migraine
- to treat glaucoma
- relieves symptoms (e.g. reduces the heart rate) in hyperthyroidism

### When to take this medicine

Beta-blockers are usually taken on an empty stomach. They should be taken regularly as your doctor directs.

**DO NOT STOP** taking it without your doctor's permission. Stopping it suddenly can bring on angina, high blood pressure, or even a heart attack and sudden death.

### If you miss a dose

Take it as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

## Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- slow or irregular heartbeat
- chest pain
- skin rash, severe itching or hives
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of legs or ankles
- tingling, numbness and sudden colour changes in the hands or feet

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you:

- dizziness or tiredness
- headache
- difficulty sleeping or bad dreams
- mood changes
- cold hands or feet
- dry eyes
- decreased sexual activity
- gastrointestinal (stomach) upsets such as nausea and/or vomiting

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any side effect is of a concern to you.

## Other Medication

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary medicines or those you can buy without a prescription.

If you have diabetes, beta-blockers may cover the symptoms of hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar level) e.g. a fast heart beat. In asthmatics it can cause a constriction of the lungs which can result in shortness of breath.

Prior to surgery of any kind tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking this medicine.

## Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

**Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.**