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Beclometasone tablets for ulcerative colitis (Clipper)

Beclometasone belongs to a class of medicines known as corticosteroids (more commonly called steroids).

Depending on the length of your course of treatment, your pharmacist may give you a blue steroid treatment card. If so, carry this with you at all times while you are taking beclometasone tablets.

If you need any medical treatment, make sure the person treating you knows that you are taking a steroid tablet.

About beclometasone tablets for ulcerative colitis

Type of medicine	A corticosteroid, also commonly called an oral steroid
Used for	Ulcerative colitis (in adults)
Also called	Beclomethasone (in US); Clipper®
Available as	Modified-release tablets (made to pass through your stomach and be released slowly in your bowel)

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a disease where inflammation develops in your large intestine (the colon and rectum). The most common symptom when the disease flares up is diarrhoea mixed with blood. An **aminosalicylate** medicine (such as **mesalazine**) is the usual first choice of treatment to ease a flare-up of symptoms. Sometimes this medicine on its own does not control your symptoms sufficiently. Beclometasone tablets are prescribed alongside the aminosalicylate medicine as an add-on treatment.

Beclometasone is a steroid (corticosteroid) medicine which helps to reduce inflammation. A course of treatment with beclometasone will last a few weeks only – it will be stopped once your flare-up has settled.

Before taking beclometasone tablets

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking beclometasone it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding (even though beclometasone could still be prescribed for you).
- If you have any kind of infection, or if you have ever had tuberculosis (TB).
- If you have had a heart attack, or if you have a heart condition.
- If you have any problems with the way your liver works, or if you have any problems with the way your kidneys work.
- If you have diabetes, or if you have an eye condition called glaucoma. You should also tell your doctor if a close member of your family has either of these conditions.
- If you currently have any of the following conditions: high blood pressure, 'thinning' of the bones (osteoporosis), diverticulitis, an underactive thyroid gland, epilepsy, cataract, or a condition causing severe muscle weakness, called myasthenia gravis.
- If you have ever had any of the following: a blood clot in a blood vessel, a stomach ulcer, or a mental health problem such as depression or psychosis.

- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine, or if you have ever developed muscle pain after taking a steroid medicine.

How to take beclometasone tablets

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about beclometasone, and will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- Take beclometasone exactly as your doctor tells you to. The usual dose is one tablet in the morning, taken either before or after a light breakfast. Swallow the tablet whole (this means do not break, crush, or chew it). Swallow the tablet with a drink of water.
- Continue to take a tablet each day until your doctor tells you to stop. You will be prescribed a course of treatment that lasts for up to four weeks. You may be asked to reduce your dose gradually at the end of the course of treatment.
- Try to take your doses at the same time of day each day. Doing this will help you to remember to take beclometasone regularly. If you do forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day, leave out the missed dose completely - do not take two doses on the same day to make up for a missed dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.
- If your course of treatment lasts for more than three weeks, you will be given a blue 'steroid treatment card' which says that you are on steroids and which contains some important advice for you. It is important that you read this card and carry it with you while you are taking beclometasone. It contains details about your dose, how long you have been taking a steroid for, and who prescribed it for you. Please make sure that this information is kept up to date.

- Beclometasone could suppress your immune system, so it is important if you become ill that you make an appointment to see your doctor straightaway. Also, if you come into contact with anyone who has measles, shingles or chickenpox (or who suspects they may have one of these viruses), you **must** see your doctor as soon as possible.
- Some vaccines may not be suitable for you while you are being treated with beclometasone. If you need any immunisations, make sure you mention that you are taking a steroid medicine.
- If you buy any medicines 'over the counter', check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with beclometasone.
- If you are having an operation or any medical treatment, it is important that you tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking beclometasone. Even after your course of treatment is over, you must still remember to mention that you have recently received a steroid to anyone treating you during the next 12 months.

Can beclometasone tablets cause problems?

Along with its useful effects, beclometasone can cause unwanted side-effects which your doctor will discuss with you. The benefits of taking beclometasone usually outweigh the side-effects; however, they can sometimes be troublesome. Although not everyone experiences side-effects, and some will improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist if you become concerned about any of the following:

B eclometasone side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 100 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling anxious, mood changes	If you become anxious, confused, or start having worrying thoughts about harming yourself, speak with your doctor as soon as possible
Tummy (abdominal) pain, feeling sick (nausea)	Stick to simple foods - avoid fatty or spicy meals
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Constipation	Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water
Feeling sleepy, muscle cramps, fever and flu-like symptoms, and heavy periods	If any of these become troublesome, speak with your doctor

For more information about side-effects which can develop when steroids are taken longer-term, please see the separate leaflet called [Oral Steroids](#).

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the tablets, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

How to store beclometasone tablets

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital at once. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Clipper® 5 mg sustained release tablets](#); Chiesi Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated May 2019.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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