

## Carvedilol tablets – a beta-blocker

Treatment with carvedilol is usually long-term. Continue to take the tablets regularly unless you are told otherwise.

There are several different strengths of tablet. If your tablets look unexpectedly different from before, ask your pharmacist to check them for you.

The most common side-effects are feeling tired and/or dizzy, and headache.

### About carvedilol

Type of medicine	A beta-adrenoceptor blocking medicine (often referred to as a beta-blocker)
Used for	High blood pressure; angina; heart failure
Available as	Tablets

Carvedilol belongs to the group of medicines referred to as beta-blockers. It is a medicine which works on the heart and blood vessels. It does this by blocking tiny areas (called beta-adrenergic receptors) where messages sent by some nerves are received by your heart and blood vessels. As a result, your heart beats more slowly and with less force. The pressure of blood within your blood vessels is reduced and it is easier for your heart to pump blood around your body.

These actions are of benefit if you have [high blood pressure \(hypertension\)](#), or if you have [heart failure](#) which is a condition where your heart is not working as well as it should. Because your heart is using less energy, it also helps to reduce chest pain if you have [angina](#).

## Before taking carvedilol

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 carvedilol it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have asthma or any other breathing disorder.
- 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 low blood pressure or poor circulation.
- If you have diabetes.
- If you have a skin problem called psoriasis.
- If you have a condition causing muscle weakness, called myasthenia gravis.
- If you have been told you have a slow heartbeat or heart block (a slow and irregular heartbeat).
- If you have been told you have chest pain caused by spasms of your heart's blood vessels, called Prinzmetal's angina.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking 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 had any other serious allergic reaction.

## How to take carvedilol

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about carvedilol and will provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you may experience from taking it.

- Take the tablets exactly as your doctor tells you to. Depending on the reason you are taking carvedilol, you will be asked to take either one or two doses a day. People with high blood pressure are usually asked to take one dose a day, whilst people with angina or heart failure will be asked to take two doses a day. Your doctor will tell you which dose is right for you, and the directions for taking the tablets will also be printed on the label of the pack to remind you about what the doctor said.
- Carvedilol tablets are available in several different strengths. When starting your treatment your doctor may give you a low-strength tablet and then gradually increase the strength of the tablets over a few days or weeks. Each time you collect a fresh supply of tablets it is a good idea to check to make sure you receive the strength you are expecting. If you have any questions, please ask your pharmacist to advise you.
- You can take the tablets either with or without food, but try to take your doses at the same time of day each day as this will help you to remember to take carvedilol regularly. The tablets are best swallowed with a drink of water.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember (unless it is nearly time for your next dose, in which case leave out the missed dose and take the next dose as normal). Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten 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.
- The tablets can reduce the amount of tears your eyes make. If you wear contact lenses and this causes your eyes to feel drier than usual, speak with your doctor or optician for advice.
- If you drink alcohol, ask your doctor for advice about taking carvedilol and alcohol. Alcohol will add to the blood pressure-lowering effect of carvedilol which will make you feel dizzy and so may not be recommended for you.

- If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to take with carvedilol. Some medicines may not be (including some anti-inflammatory painkillers, and cold or flu remedies).
- If you are due to have an operation or dental treatment, it is important to tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking a beta-blocker. This is particularly important if you are likely to be given an anaesthetic.
- Your doctor may give you dietary and lifestyle advice about eating a healthy diet, not smoking, and taking regular exercise. If so, it is important that you follow the advice you are given.
- If you have diabetes, carvedilol can hide the symptoms of low blood sugar. Your doctor will advise you about this.
- Treatment with carvedilol is usually long-term. Continue to take the tablets unless your doctor tells you to stop. Stopping treatment suddenly can cause problems in some people, so your doctor may want you to reduce your dose gradually if this becomes necessary.

## **Can carvedilol cause problems?**

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with carvedilol. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

<p><b>Very common carvedilol side-effects (these affect more than 1 in 10 people)</b></p>	<p><b>What can I do if I experience this?</b></p>
<p>Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired or light-headed</p>	<p>If affected do not drive and do not use tools or machines until you feel better. Getting up and moving more slowly may help. If you begin to feel dizzy, lie down so that you do not faint, then sit for a few moments before standing. Also, try taking your doses with something to eat if you are not already doing so, as this can help to reduce feelings of dizziness.</p>
<p>Headache</p>	<p>Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, speak with your doctor</p>
<p>Heart failure</p>	<p>Your doctor will monitor for this</p>
<p><b>Common carvedilol side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)</b></p>	<p><b>What can I do if I experience this?</b></p>
<p>Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), indigestion, diarrhoea, tummy (abdominal) pain</p>	<p>Stick to simple foods and drink plenty of water</p>
<p>Cold fingers or toes, infections, feeling depressed, increased weight, eyesight problems, breathing problems, aches and pains, and swollen feet and ankles</p>	<p>Speak with your doctor if any of these become troublesome</p>

Changes to some medical tests,  
slow heartbeat

Your doctor will monitor for these

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 carvedilol

- 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](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Carvedilol 3.125 mg/ 6.25 mg/ 12.5 mg/ 25 mg film-coated tablet](#); Aurobindo Pharma - Milpharm Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated December 2019.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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