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## Formoterol (Atimos Modulite, Foradil, Oxis Turbohaler)

Make sure you know how to use the inhaler device properly. If you are not sure, ask your nurse, pharmacist or doctor to show you.

If your breathing gets worse or if you do not get the usual relief from the inhaler, please contact your doctor straightaway.

Do not smoke. Smoking causes irritation to the lungs and will make your condition worse.

### About formoterol

Type of medicine	A long-acting beta <sub>2</sub> agonist bronchodilator
Used for	Asthma; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other airways-related breathing problems
Also called	Formoterol Easyhaler®; Atimos Modulite®; Foradil®; Oxis® Turbohaler <b>Combination inhalers containing formoterol:</b> Duaklir® (with <a href="#">aclidinium</a> ); DuoResp Spiromax®, Fobumix® Easyhaler, Symbicort®, WockAIR® (with <a href="#">budesonide</a> ); Flutiform® (with <a href="#">fluticasone</a> ); Fostair®, Luforbec® (with <a href="#">beclometasone</a> ); Bevespi® Aerosphere (with <a href="#">glycopyrronium</a> ); Trimbow® (with beclometasone and glycopyrronium)
Available as	Aerosol inhalers, dry powder inhalers and capsules with an inhaler device

Formoterol is called a bronchodilator, as it widens (dilates) your airways. It is intended to be used regularly to relieve airways-related problems in people who have [asthma](#) or [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#). It works by opening up the air passages in your lungs so that air can flow into your lungs more freely. This helps to ease symptoms such as coughing, wheezing and feeling breathless.

Use formoterol every day. It is a long-acting bronchodilator, which means that it works throughout the day. It is prescribed to reduce your symptoms over the long term. Some brands of formoterol inhaler can also be used by people with asthma as a rescue treatment for sudden breathlessness or wheezing.

If you have asthma, formoterol will be prescribed for you alongside a preventer (steroid) [inhaler](#). Some brands of formoterol inhaler also contain a steroid ([beclometasone](#), [budesonide](#), or [fluticasone](#)). These are helpful if you need both a preventer and a reliever medicine to control your symptoms. Combination brands of formoterol inhaler may also contain other bronchodilator medicines such as [aclidinium](#) or [glycopyrronium](#). If you have COPD, you could be prescribed these combination brands to help reduce the number of inhalers you need to use each day.

## Before using formoterol

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

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding. This is because it is particularly important that your breathing is well controlled if you are pregnant.
- If you have heart or blood vessel problems, or if you have an irregular heartbeat.
- If you have high blood pressure.
- If you have an overactive thyroid gland.
- If you have high sugar levels in your blood (diabetes).

- If you have been told by a doctor that you have low levels of potassium in your blood.
  - 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. Also, please make sure that the doctor prescribing this inhaler for you knows about any other inhalers you are using.
  - If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.
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## How to use formoterol

- Before you use the inhaler, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about formoterol and diagrams to remind you how to use and clean your inhaler device; it will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from using it.
- Follow your doctor's instructions carefully and make sure you know how to use your inhaler properly. There are three types of inhaler device - an aerosol inhaler, a turbohaler and one which uses capsules containing powder. If you are not sure how to use the device you have been given, please ask your nurse, doctor or pharmacist to show you again.
- Use the inhaler regularly. Your doctor will tell you whether to use one or two sprays, and whether to use it once or twice each day. Your dose will also be printed on the label on your inhaler to remind you about what the doctor said.
- Try to use the inhaler at the same time(s) each day, as this will help you to remember to use it regularly. If you do forget a dose, use the inhaler as soon as you remember, but do not 'double up' doses to make up for any forgotten ones.
- Just a reminder - if you have been prescribed Foradil® capsules, these must not be swallowed. They are to be used with the inhaler device only.

- Your doctor may give you a spacer device to use with some formoterol inhalers, particularly if you struggle to co-ordinate breathing and pressing the inhaler device. Spacer devices are also useful for giving formoterol to younger children. The device helps to make sure that the medicine travels right into the lungs. Your doctor or pharmacist will be able to advise you on how to use the spacer device with the inhaler.

## Getting the most from your treatment

- If you usually use a steroid (preventer) inhaler and have just been prescribed formoterol, you should continue to use your steroid inhaler as well as formoterol. You should continue to use both inhalers, even if your symptoms improve. Your doctor will tell you if it is appropriate for you to 'step down' your treatment.
- If you have asthma, you will receive a written asthma action plan from your nurse or doctor which will help you to manage your asthma and tell you what to do if you have an asthma attack. It will tell you how many puffs (inhalations) to use for each dose, and the maximum number of inhalations you should use in 24 hours. Some brands of formoterol inhaler can be used as a rescue treatment for sudden breathlessness or wheezing. Alternatively, your doctor may prescribe another inhaler (a shorter-acting bronchodilator such as salbutamol or terbutaline) for you to use as a rescue treatment. Make sure that you keep the inhaler you are using for 'rescue' with you all the time.
- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor and asthma clinic. This is so your doctor can review your condition on a regular basis.
- Do not smoke. Smoking causes irritation and damage to the lungs and will make your condition worse. Speak with your doctor or practice nurse for further advice if you are having difficulty in stopping smoking.
- If you find that your symptoms are getting worse, continue to use your inhalers but also contact your doctor or nurse for advice **straightaway**. Also, if your usual dose of formoterol does not provide relief from your symptoms for at least twelve hours, speak with your doctor.

- If you have diabetes you may need to check your blood glucose more frequently, as formoterol may affect the levels of sugar in your blood. Your doctor will advise you about this.

## Can formoterol 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 formoterol. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your inhaler. 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.

Common formoterol side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling shaky	This usually improves as you adjust to the inhaler. If it continues, speak with your doctor
Headache	This usually improves after the first week or so of using the inhaler but, in the meantime, ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headache continues longer than a week or so, speak with your doctor for further advice
Cough, feeling of a fast heartbeat (palpitations)	If either of these becomes troublesome, speak with your doctor

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

## How to store formoterol

- 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

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with your other 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. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.

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, Atimos® Modulite 12 mcg inhaler](#); Chiesi Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated May 2018.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Oxis® Turbohaler 12, inhalation powder](#); AstraZeneca UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated September 2019.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Foradil® 12 mcg inhalation powder, hard capsules](#); Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated April 2020.

- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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