



... Terbutaline Inhalation

(ter-BYOO-ta-leen)

Terbutaline (Bricanyl®) is a fast-acting bronchodilator medication for quick-relief of wheezing and other symptoms of asthma. “Reliever” medications like terbutaline is only a short-term solution to breathing problems and a “controller” medication is required to treat the underlying inflammation. It works by relaxing the muscles surrounding the airways of the lungs and opening up the airways. Terbutaline is sometimes given fifteen minutes prior to exercise to prevent asthma symptoms. Terbutaline is given to your child through a dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®).

Special instructions

- Terbutaline is used as needed for quick relief of symptoms. The effects of terbutaline last approximately 4 hours. Use as directed by your child’s health care provider.
- Do not shake the dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®) before using.
- Make sure you refill this prescription before you run out of medicine.
- If you notice that your child needs to use the inhaler more often than usual, you should talk with your child’s health care provider. If a child’s asthma is well controlled, Terbutaline should only be needed for mild, infrequent flare ups. If a child is using or needing Terbutaline on a regular basis outside of colds or flare ups, see your health care provider to have their asthma control assessed.
- The most common reasons for poor asthma control include: not taking your medication properly, forgetting to take your controller medication daily or using an empty inhaler.
- Keep this medicine out of the reach of children.
- Read and follow all instructions provided with the inhaler. Using this medicine the correct way is very important because you may not taste or feel any medication when inhaling from the dry powder inhaler. Ask your child’s health care provider, pharmacist, or certified asthma educator if you have any questions about using the inhaler.

Dose counting

- Keep track of how many doses of your child’s medicine remain and get a new prescription before it runs out.
- The dry-powder inhaler (Turbuhaler®) has a dose counter. When a red mark first appears in the little window underneath the mouthpiece, there are approximately 20 doses left. This is the time to get a new inhaler. When the red mark reaches the bottom of the window, you should discard your inhaler.

Tips for parents

If you miss a dose or forget to give this medicine, give it as soon as you remember unless it is almost time for the next dose, then skip the missed dose. Do not give extra medication to make up for the missed dose. **If you are unsure what to do about a missed dose, contact your health care provider or pharmacist.**



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Common side effects

Call your child's health care provider if the following effects continue or are bothersome:

- Fast heart rate
- Nervousness and shakiness
- Tremor
- Inability to sleep
- Flushing
- Headaches
- Weakness
- Dizziness

Warning signs

Call your child's health care provider immediately if your child:

- Needs this medicine more often than prescribed
- Is not helped by taking this medicine
- Experiences sudden worsening of shortness of breath and wheezing shortly after taking this medication
- Does not experience relief for at least 3 hours

Contact us

For additional information on this or any Health Topic, please contact the Family Support and Resource Centre (www.bcchildrens.ca/frl), or your pediatrician.

References from:

- The Children's Asthma Education Centre: www.asthma-education.com
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center: www.cincinnatichildrens.org
- The Asthma Society of Canada: www.asthma.ca
- Canadian Lung Association: www.lung.ca

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