



## ... Montelukast

(mon-te-LOO-kast)

Montelukast (Singulair®) belongs to a group of medications known as leukotriene receptor antagonists used for long-term control of mild to moderate asthma. It works to reduce the immune system's ability to cause narrowing and swelling of the airways of the lungs. Montelukast is sometimes used to treat seasonal allergies. Montelukast is available as a tablet, chewable tablet, and granules.

### Special instructions

- Montelukast is used to prevent an asthma attack. It is important that your child takes montelukast regularly as prescribed even when he or she is not having symptoms and looks well.
- Do not stop using unless told to do so by your child's health care provider.
- Montelukast will not stop your child's asthma attack. If your child is having an asthma attack, you should give a "reliever" medication (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline).
- Montelukast is not a substitute for inhaled corticosteroids (eg. fluticasone or budesonide). Do not change the dosage of these medications or stop these medications without talking to your child's health care provider even if your child feels better after starting montelukast.
- The oral granules can be mixed with cold or room temperature soft food or given directly into your child's mouth. Do not mix oral granules in liquid, but your child may drink liquid after taking the dose.
- If the oral granules are mixed with food, give the dose to the child within 15 minutes of mixing with the food.
- This medication can be taken with or without food.
- Lactose is a non medicinal ingredient so inform your child's health care provider if your child is lactose intolerant
- It may take up to two weeks for this medication to work.
- Keep this medication out of the reach of children.

### Tips for parents

If you miss a dose or forget to give this medication, 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.

### Common side effects

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

- Stomach ache
- Hyperactivity
- Thirst
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Nightmares, mood changes
- Scaly and itchy skin



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### Warning signs

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

- Does not respond to his/her asthma "reliever" or "rescue" medication (eg. salbutamol or terbutaline).
- Seems to require more frequent use of asthma "reliever" or "rescue" medication.
- Develops worsening symptoms of asthma such as increased wheezing, coughing, tightness or shortness of breath and if symptoms are waking your child up at night

### Contact us

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

### References from:

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

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