

Department of Cardiology/Pharmacy

Beta-Blockers after a heart attack

Examples: **Atenolol**
 Metoprolol
 Bisoprolol

Action

Beta-blockers are used to treat many problems. After a heart attack they:

- help to control high blood pressure
- help to stop you from getting angina
- help your heart to beat regularly

Taking your Beta-Blocker

Your doctor will choose which beta-blocker you should take. Some are taken once a day but some are taken more often. Always follow the instructions on the label of your medicine. Do not stop taking your beta-blocker unless your doctor tells you to.

Problems to watch for

- Tell your doctor **straight away** if you have asthma or if you feel wheezy after taking your beta-blocker.
- Tell your doctor if you notice that you feel short of breath or if you get swollen ankles. Your doctor will want to check that your heart is working properly.
- Tell your doctor straight away if you are diabetic. You might need to check your blood sugar more often. Your doctor might change the dose of your medication.
- When you take your beta-blocker you might notice side effects such as:
 - Tingling or pains in your fingers and toes, especially in cold weather.
 - Feeling tired.
 - Feeling dizzy or faint when you stand up.
 - Having strange dreams.
 - Having an upset stomach.
 - Having a skin rash or dry eyes.
 - Having problems with sexual intercourse.
- Tell your doctor if you notice any strange effects from taking your beta-blocker.
- Women who are pregnant or who are breast feeding should talk to their doctor before taking beta-blockers. The doctor will want to discuss the risks and benefits of taking beta-blockers with you.



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

Authors	Pharmacy Department
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	01223 245151
Publish/Review date	March 2011/March 2014 (no changes made)
File name	Beta_blockers_heart_attack.doc
Version number/Ref	3/PIN1597