

Heart Medicines: Your Daily Safety Guide

Medical-Surgical · Cardiovascular

Beta blockers and ACE inhibitors lower blood pressure and protect your heart with heart failure or after a heart attack. Take them every day, even when you feel well.

Keep a daily log

- Check your blood pressure and pulse as your care team advises.
- Write them down. Bring your log to every visit.
- Your pulse limit: _____.

Beta blockers (names end in "-lol")

- If your pulse is under 60 or you feel dizzy, call your provider before your dose.
- **Never stop suddenly.** Stopping fast raises the risk of chest pain, very high blood pressure, or a heart attack.
- Feeling tired is common at first. Tell your provider if it lasts.
- If you have diabetes: this medicine hides a fast heartbeat and shakiness from low blood sugar. Check your sugar when you feel unwell.

ACE inhibitors (names end in "-pril")

- Stand up slowly, mainly after the first doses.
- Tell your provider about a dry cough that will not go away. A different medicine helps.
- Do not use potassium pills or salt substitutes unless your provider says so.

- Keep your blood tests for potassium and kidney function.
- Do not take it during pregnancy. Call right away if you think you are pregnant.

Ask before other medicines

- Ask before taking ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve).
- Never run out. Refill early.

Call your provider today if you have

- A pulse under 60 or dizziness when you stand
- A dry cough that will not go away
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or possible pregnancy
- Weight gain, new swelling, or wheezing

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- Swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Trouble swallowing or breathing
- Chest pain or fainting

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/heart-medicines-beta-blockers-ace-inhibitors/patient

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