



## Pediatric Drug Information

**ALBUTEROL** (al byooter ole)

**Brand Name:** Ventolin<sup>®</sup>, Proventil<sup>®</sup>

### ***Why is this drug prescribed?***

- This medication relaxes and opens the air passages to the lungs, making it easier to breathe. It reduces the severity of reactive airway disease (asthma attacks) and troubled breathing caused by bronchitis, emphysema, and other lung diseases. It is also used to prevent breathing difficulty (bronchospasm) when exercising.

### ***When should it be used?***

- This medication is usually given two to four times a day (by mouth).
- Every four to six hours as needed (by inhalation) or 15 minutes before exercising to prevent breathing problems.
- Follow the instructions on your prescription label carefully.
- The inhalation starts to take effect within five to fifteen minutes and usually goes on working for three or four hours.
- Treatment should start with first symptoms of bronchospasm.

### ***How should it be used?***

- This medication comes as tablets, oral liquid (syrup), aerosol with a special inhaler, and a solution used in a inhalation machine. Your prescription label tells you how much to take at each dose.
- You may obtain a specially marked measuring spoon from the pharmacist to be sure of an accurate dose of the syrup.
- **Inhaler:** Read the written instructions that come with it. Be sure to perform a demonstration to a health care provider before your child begins to use this device. If your child has difficulty getting the medication into his lungs, a “spacer” (special device that attaches to your inhaler) may help. Ask your doctor about the “spacer.” If your child has used the inhaler as directed and still cannot breathe freely, contact your doctor.

- **Nebulizer Machine:** The home nebulizer machine is used for moderate to severe reactive airway disease. This is ordered by your child's doctor.

***What special instructions should I follow when giving this drug?***

- Do not give to your child more often than prescribed. Increasing the dosage can be dangerous. The doctor may prescribe both an oral form and inhaled form; these may be taken together.
- If you need to give this medication more often than prescribed or if your condition worsens, contact your doctor.
- Inhalation devices require regular cleaning, and some require periodic replacement. Follow the instructions that come with your device.
- School personnel should be aware of your child's need for a bronchodilator, to avoid misunderstanding when it is used at school.

***What side effects can this drug cause? What can I do about them?***

Although side effects from albuterol are not common, they can occur.

- Unusual taste, dry or irritated throat and mouth (from the inhalation). Gargle with water after each treatment.
- Tremors, nervousness, excitement, palpitations, fast heartbeat, dizziness, headache, insomnia, nausea, hoarseness, cough. Contact your doctor if these effects are severe or persist.

***What other precautions should I follow when giving this drug?***

- Your doctor should be aware of your child's current medical condition, medical history, and drug reactions. Your doctor should know all medications your child is currently taking including all non-prescription drugs.
- Do not allow anyone else to take this medication.

***What storage conditions are necessary for this drug?***

- Keep this medication in the container it came in.
- Be sure to keep all medications out of the reach of children.
- Store at room temperature in a cool place.
- The inhaler should not be refrigerated, stored near heat or an open flame, or discarded in a fire or incinerator. Avoid puncturing the aerosol container.