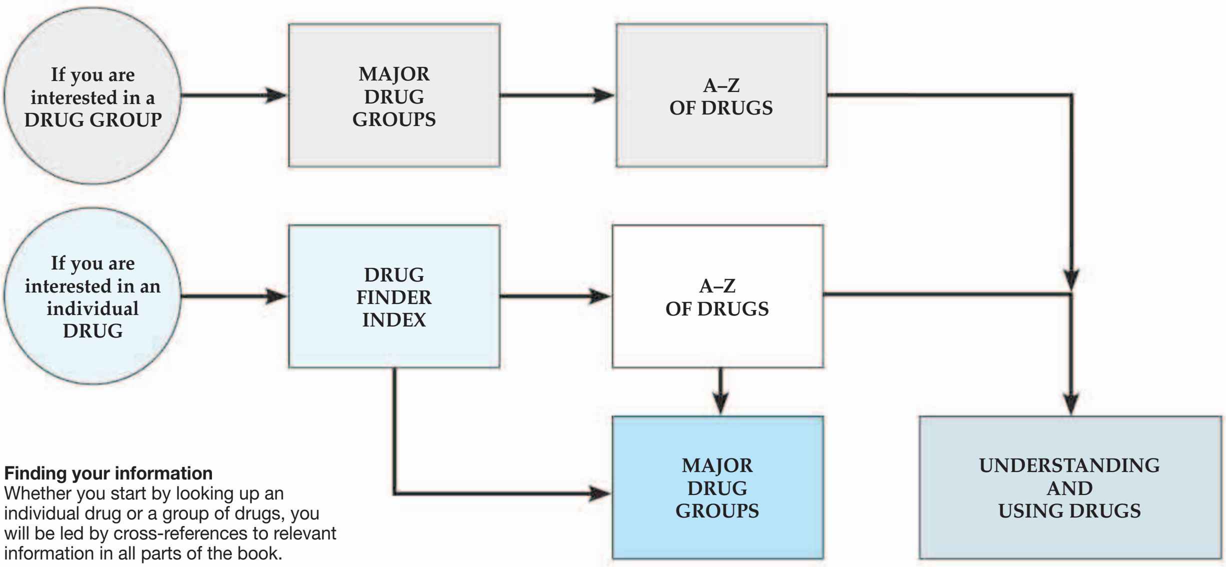
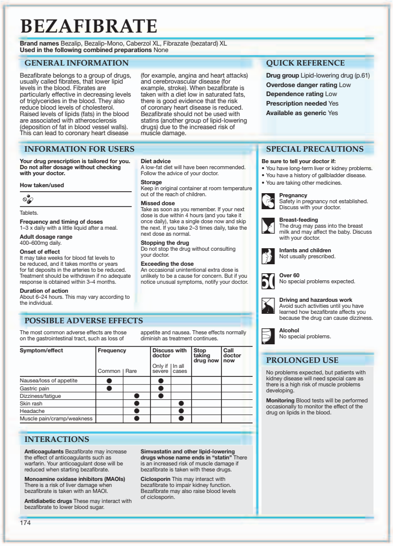


Finding your information
Whether you start by looking up an individual drug or a group of drugs, you will be led by cross-references to relevant information in all parts of the book.

3 A–Z OF DRUGS

In this part, standard-format profiles of 278 generic drugs help you to find specific information quickly and easily; cross-references to relevant major drug groups are also provided. Supplementary sections cover vitamins and minerals, drugs of abuse, complementary and alternative medicine, drugs in sport, and medicines and travel.



BEZAFIBRATE

Brand names Bezalip, Bezalip-Mono, Caberzol XL, Fibrazate (bezatard) XL
Used in the following combined preparations None

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bezafibrate belongs to a group of drugs, usually called fibrates, that lower lipid levels in the blood. Fibrates are particularly effective in decreasing levels of triglycerides in the blood. They also reduce blood levels of cholesterol. Raised levels of lipids (fats) in the blood are associated with atherosclerosis (deposition of fat in blood vessel walls). This can lead to coronary heart disease (for example, angina and heart attacks) and cerebrovascular disease (for example, stroke). When bezafibrate is taken with a diet low in saturated fats, there is good evidence that the risk of coronary heart disease is reduced. Bezafibrate should not be used with statins (another group of lipid-lowering drugs) due to the increased risk of muscle damage.

QUICK REFERENCE

Drug group Lipid-lowering drug (p.61)
Overdose danger rating Low
Dependence rating Low
Prescription needed Yes
Available as generic Yes

INFORMATION FOR USERS

Your drug prescription is tailored for you. Do not alter dosage without checking with your doctor.

How taken/used
Tablets.

Frequency and timing of doses
1–3 x daily with a little liquid after a meal.

Adult dosage range
400–600mg daily.

Onset of effect
It may take weeks for blood fat levels to be reduced, and it takes months or years for fat deposits in the arteries to be reduced. Treatment should be withdrawn if no adequate response is obtained within 3–4 months.

Duration of action
About 6–24 hours. This may vary according to the individual.

Diet advice
A low-fat diet will have been recommended. Follow the advice of your doctor.

Storage
Keep in original container at room temperature out of the reach of children.

Missed dose
Take as soon as you remember. If your next dose is due within 4 hours (and you take it once daily), take a single dose now and skip the next. If you take 2–3 times daily, take the next dose as normal.

Stopping the drug
Do not stop the drug without consulting your doctor.

Exceeding the dose
An occasional unintentional extra dose is unlikely to be a cause for concern. But if you notice unusual symptoms, notify your doctor.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

Be sure to tell your doctor if:
- You have long-term liver or kidney problems.
- You have a history of gallbladder disease.
- You are taking other medicines.

Pregnancy
Safety in pregnancy not established. Discuss with your doctor.

Breast-feeding
The drug may pass into the breast milk and may affect the baby. Discuss with your doctor.

Infants and children
Not usually prescribed.

Over 60
No special problems expected.

Driving and hazardous work
Avoid such activities until you have learned how bezafibrate affects you because the drug can cause dizziness.

Alcohol
No special problems.

POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

The most common adverse effects are those on the gastrointestinal tract, such as loss of appetite and nausea. These effects normally diminish as treatment continues.

Symptom/effect	Frequency: Common	Frequency: Rare	Discuss with doctor: Only if severe	Discuss with doctor: In all cases	Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
Nausea/loss of appetite	●		●			
Gastric pain	●		●			
Dizziness/fatigue		●	●			
Skin rash		●		●		
Headache		●		●		
Muscle pain/cramp/weakness		●		●		

PROLONGED USE

No problems expected, but patients with kidney disease will need special care as there is a high risk of muscle problems developing.

Monitoring Blood tests will be performed occasionally to monitor the effect of the drug on lipids in the blood.

INTERACTIONS

Anticoagulants Bezafibrate may increase the effect of anticoagulants such as warfarin. Your anticoagulant dose will be reduced when starting bezafibrate.

Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs) There is a risk of liver damage when bezafibrate is taken with an MAOI.

Antidiabetic drugs These may interact with bezafibrate to lower blood sugar.

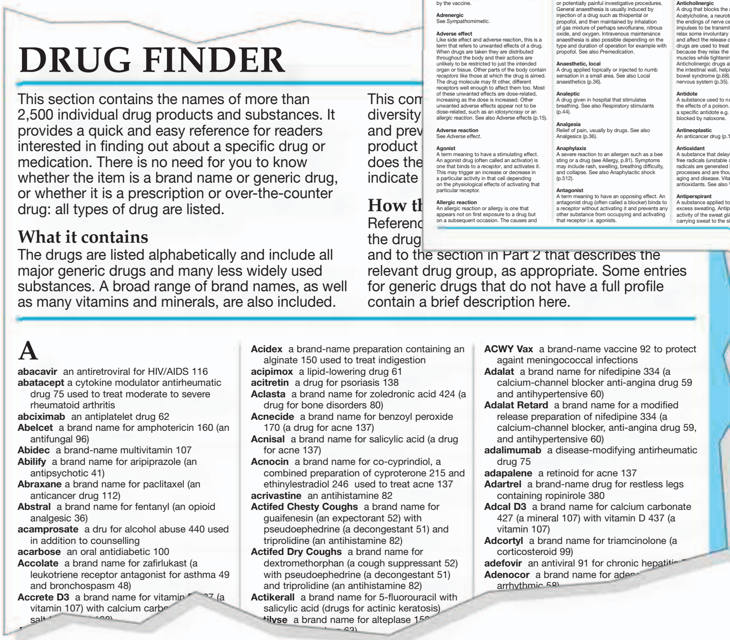
Simvastatin and other lipid-lowering drugs whose name ends in "statin" There is an increased risk of muscle damage if bezafibrate is taken with these drugs.

Ciclosporin This may interact with bezafibrate to impair kidney function. Bezafibrate may also raise blood levels of ciclosporin.

174

4 INFORMATION AND INDEX

Useful resources, including websites, direct you to further information; the glossary explains technical words; the drug finder helps you to find information on specific brand-name drugs and generic substances; and the index enables you to look up references throughout the book.



DRUG FINDER

This section contains the names of more than 2,500 individual drug products and substances. It provides a quick and easy reference for readers interested in finding out about a specific drug or medication. There is no need for you to know whether the item is a brand name or generic drug, or whether it is a prescription or over-the-counter drug: all types of drug are listed.

What it contains

The drugs are listed alphabetically and include all major generic drugs and many less widely used substances. A broad range of brand names, as well as many vitamins and minerals, are also included.

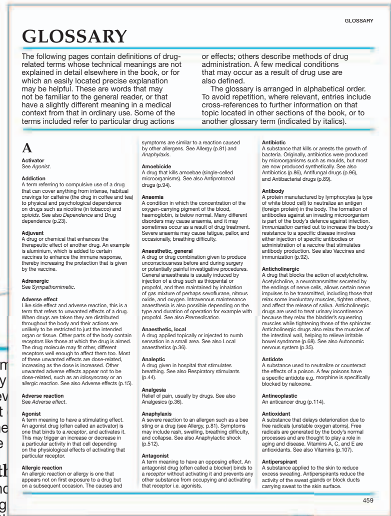
This com… diversity… and prev… product… does the… indicate…

How th…

Referenc… the drug… and to the section in Part 2 that describes the relevant drug group, as appropriate. Some entries for generic drugs that do not have a full profile contain a brief description here.

A

abacavir an antiretroviral for HIV/AIDS 116
abatacept a cytokine modulator antirheumatic drug 75 used to treat moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis
abciximab an antiplatelet drug 62
Abelcet a brand name for amphotericin 160 (an antifungal 96)
Abidec a brand-name multivitamin 107
Abilify a brand name for aripiprazole (an antipsychotic 41)
Abraxane a brand name for paclitaxel (an anticancer drug 112)
Abstral a brand name for fentanyl (an opioid analgesic 36)
acamprosate a dru for alcohol abuse 440 used in addition to counselling
acarbose an oral antidiabetic 100
Accolate a brand name for zafirlukast (a leukotriene receptor antagonist for asthma 49 and bronchospasm 48)
Accrete D3 a brand name for vitamin … (a vitamin 107) with calcium carb… salt …
Acidex a brand-name preparation containing an alginate 150 used to treat indigestion
acipimox a lipid-lowering drug 61
acitretin a drug for psoriasis 138
Aclasta a brand name for zoledronic acid 424 (a drug for bone disorders 80)
Acnecide a brand name for benzoyl peroxide 170 (a drug for acne 137)
Acnisal a brand name for salicylic acid (a drug for acne 137)
Acnocin a brand name for co-cyprindiol, a combined preparation of cyproterone 215 and ethinylestradiol 246 used to treat acne 137
acrivastine an antihistamine 82
Actifed Chesty Coughs a brand name for guaifenesin (an expectorant 52) with pseudoephedrine (a decongestant 51) and triprolidine (an antihistamine 82)
Actifed Dry Coughs a brand name for dextromethorphan (a cough suppressant 52) with pseudoephedrine (a decongestant 51) and triprolidine (an antihistamine 82)
Actikerall a brand name for 5-fluorouracil with salicylic acid (drugs for actinic keratosis)
…tilyse a brand name for alteplase 15…
ACWY Vax a brand-name vaccine 92 to protect againt meningococcal infections
Adalat a brand name for nifedipine 334 (a calcium-channel blocker anti-angina drug 59 and antihypertensive 60)
Adalat Retard a brand name for a modified release preparation of nifedipine 334 (a calcium-channel blocker, anti-angina drug 59, and antihypertensive 60)
adalimumab a disease-modifying antirheumatic drug 75
adapalene a retinoid for acne 137
Adartrel a brand-name drug for restless legs containing ropinirole 380
Adcal D3 a brand name for calcium carbonate 427 (a mineral 107) with vitamin D 437 (a vitamin 107)
Adcortyl a brand name for triamcinolone (a corticosteroid 99)
adefovir an antiviral 91 for chronic hepatiti…
Adenocor a brand name for aden… arrhythmic 58)



GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

The following pages contain definitions of drug-related terms whose technical meanings are not explained in detail elsewhere in the book, or for which an easily located precise explanation may be helpful. These are words that may not be familiar to the general reader, or that have a slightly different meaning in a medical context from that in ordinary use. Some of the terms included refer to particular drug actions or effects; others describe methods of drug administration. A few medical conditions that may occur as a result of drug use are also defined.

The glossary is arranged in alphabetical order. To avoid repetition, where relevant, entries include cross-references to further information on that topic located in other sections of the book, or to another glossary term (indicated by italics).

A

Activator
See *Agonist*.

Addiction
A term referring to compulsive use of a drug that can cover anything from intense, habitual cravings for caffeine (the drug in coffee and tea) to physical and psychological dependence on drugs such as nicotine (in tobacco) and *opioids*. See also *Dependence* and Drug dependence (p.23).

Adjuvant
A drug or chemical that enhances the therapeutic effect of another drug. An example is aluminium, which is added to certain vaccines to enhance the immune response, thereby increasing the protection that is given by the vaccine.

Adrenergic
See *Sympathomimetic*.

Adverse effect
Like side effect and adverse reaction, this is a term that refers to unwanted effects of a drug. When drugs are taken they are distributed throughout the body and their actions are unlikely to be restricted to just the intended organ or tissue. Other parts of the body contain *receptors* like those at which the drug is aimed. The drug molecule may fit other, different receptors well enough to affect them too. Most of these unwanted effects are dose-related, increasing as the dose is increased. Other unwanted adverse effects appear not to be dose-related, such as an *idiosyncrasy* or an *allergic reaction*. See also Adverse effects (p.15).

Adverse reaction
See *Adverse effect*.

Agonist
A term meaning to have a stimulating effect. An agonist drug (often called an activator) is one that binds to a *receptor*, and activates it. This may trigger an increase or decrease in a particular activity in that cell depending on the physiological effects of activating that particular receptor.

Allergic reaction
An allergic reaction or allergy is one that appears not on first exposure to a drug but on a subsequent occasion. The causes and symptoms are similar to a reaction caused by other allergens. See Allergy (p.81) and *Anaphylaxis*.

Amoebicide
A drug that kills amoebae (single-celled microorganisms). See also Antiprotozoal drugs (p.94).

Anaemia
A condition in which the concentration of the oxygen-carrying pigment of the blood, haemoglobin, is below normal. Many different disorders may cause anaemia, and it may sometimes occur as a result of drug treatment. Severe anaemia may cause fatigue, pallor, and occasionally, breathing difficulty.

Anaesthetic, general
A drug or drug combination given to produce unconsciousness before and during surgery or potentially painful investigative procedures. General anaesthesia is usually induced by injection of a drug such as thiopental or propofol, and then maintained by inhalation of gas mixture of perhaps sevoflurane, nitrous oxide, and oxygen. Intravenous maintenance anaesthesia is also possible depending on the type and duration of operation for example with propofol. See also *Premedication*.

Anaesthetic, local
A drug applied topically or injected to numb sensation in a small area. See also Local anaesthetics (p.36).

Analeptic
A drug given in hospital that stimulates breathing. See also Respiratory stimulants (p.44).

Analgesia
Relief of pain, usually by drugs. See also Analgesics (p.36).

Anaphylaxis
A severe reaction to an allergen such as a bee sting or a drug (see Allergy, p.81). Symptoms may include rash, swelling, breathing difficulty, and collapse. See also Anaphylactic shock (p.512).

Antagonist
A term meaning to have an opposing effect. An antagonist drug (often called a blocker) binds to a *receptor* without activating it and prevents any other substance from occupying and activating that receptor i.e. agonists.

Antibiotic
A substance that kills or arrests the growth of bacteria. Originally, antibiotics were produced by microorganisms such as moulds, but most are now produced synthetically. See also Antibiotics (p.86), Antifungal drugs (p.96), and Antibacterial drugs (p.89).

Antibody
A protein manufactured by lymphocytes (a type of white blood cell) to neutralize an antigen (foreign protein) in the body. The formation of antibodies against an invading microorganism is part of the body's defence against infection. *Immunization* carried out to increase the body's resistance to a specific disease involves either injection of specific antibodies or administration of a *vaccine* that stimulates antibody production. See also Vaccines and immunization (p.92).

Anticholinergic
A drug that blocks the action of acetylcholine. Acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter secreted by the endings of nerve cells, allows certain nerve impulses to be transmitted, including those that relax some involuntary muscles, tighten others, and affect the release of saliva. Anticholinergic drugs are used to treat urinary incontinence because they relax the bladder's squeezing muscles while tightening those of the sphincter. Anticholinergic drugs also relax the muscles of the intestinal wall, helping to relieve irritable bowel syndrome (p.68). See also Autonomic nervous system (p.35).

Antidote
A substance used to neutralize or counteract the effects of a poison. A few poisons have a specific antidote e.g. morphine is specifically blocked by naloxone.

Antineoplastic
An anticancer drug (p.114).

Antioxidant
A substance that delays deterioration due to free radicals (unstable oxygen atoms). Free radicals are generated by the body's normal processes and are thought to play a role in aging and disease. Vitamins A, C, and E are antioxidants. See also Vitamins (p.107).

Antiperspirant
A substance applied to the skin to reduce excess sweating. Antiperspirants reduce the activity of the sweat glands or block ducts carrying sweat to the skin surface.

459