

BUDESONIDE

Brand names Budelin, Budenofalk, Entocort, Novolizer, Pulmicort, Rhinocort Aqua
Used in the following combined preparation Symbicort

GENERAL INFORMATION

Budesonide is a corticosteroid drug used as slow-release capsules to relieve the symptoms of Crohn's disease, as an enema to treat ulcerative colitis, and as an inhaler to prevent (but not stop existing) asthma attacks. Like other corticosteroids, it is used when asthma is not controlled by bronchodilators (p.48) alone. It is also used as a nasal spray to relieve the symptoms of

allergic rhinitis and for nasal polyps. Side effects are fewer and less serious with the inhaler or nasal spray because less of the drug is absorbed than with oral forms. However, mouth and throat irritation can occur with the inhaler, but can be minimized by thoroughly rinsing the mouth and gargling with water after each inhalation.

QUICK REFERENCE

Drug group Corticosteroid (p.99)
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



SR capsules, enema, inhaler, powder for inhalation, nasal spray.

Frequency and timing of doses

1–3 x daily (capsules); once daily at bedtime (enema); twice daily (inhaler); once or twice daily (nasal spray).

Dosage range

3–9mg (capsules); 2mg (enema); 200–1,600mcg (inhaler); 100–200mcg (nasal spray).

Onset of effect

Asthma Within 1 week.
Other conditions 1–3 days

Duration of action

12–24 hours.

Diet advice

None.

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 2 hours, take a single dose now and skip the next.

Stopping the drug

Do not stop taking the drug without consulting your doctor; symptoms may recur. The SR capsules used in Crohn's disease should be withdrawn gradually.

Exceeding the dose

An occasional extra dose is unlikely to be a cause for concern. But if you notice any unusual symptoms, or if a large overdose has been taken, notify your doctor.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have had tuberculosis or another respiratory infection.
- You are taking other medicines.



Pregnancy

Discuss with your doctor, especially if used for Crohn's disease.



Breast-feeding

Discuss with your doctor, especially if used for Crohn's disease.



Infants and children

Reduced dose necessary.



Over 60

No special problems.



Driving and hazardous work

No special problems.



Alcohol

No special problems.

Infection

Avoid exposure to chickenpox.

POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

As with other corticosteroids, the main side effects of inhalers and nasal spray are confined to the nasal passages and mouth. Capsules and enemas can cause gastrointestinal

disturbances and rashes. High doses of budesonide by any route can cause weight gain and other long-term side effects associated with corticosteroids.

Symptom/effect	Frequency		Discuss with doctor		Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
	Common	Rare	Only if severe	In all cases		
Inhalers and nasal spray						
Cough	●		●			
Nasal irritation	●		●			
Bruising	●		●			
Sore throat/hoarseness	●			●		
Nosebleed		●		●		
Capsules and enema						
Diarrhoea/constipation	●		●			
Rash/itching		●		●		
All preparations						
Weight gain		●		●		

INTERACTIONS

Itraconazole, ritonavir, and telaprevir may increase the blood level of budesonide and the risk of adrenal gland suppression.

PROLONGED USE

Asthma prevention is the condition for which prolonged use may be required. High doses inhaled for a prolonged period can lead to peptic ulcers, osteoporosis, glaucoma, muscle weakness, and growth retardation in children. Patients taking the drug long term are advised to carry a steroid card or wear a MedicAlert bracelet.

Monitoring If budesonide is being taken in large doses, periodic checks may be needed to make sure that the adrenal glands are working properly. Children using inhalers should have their growth (height) monitored regularly.