

# METOPROLOL

**Brand names** Betaloc, Betaloc-SA, Lopresor, Lopresor SR

**Used in the following combined preparations** None

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Metoprolol is a cardioselective beta blocker used to prevent the heart from beating too quickly in conditions such as angina, arrhythmias, and hyperthyroidism. It is also used to prevent migraine attacks and protect the heart from further damage after a heart attack. The drug is also used to treat

hypertension (high blood pressure) but is not usually used to initiate treatment. It is less likely than non-cardioselective beta blockers to provoke breathing difficulties. However, it should be avoided in people with asthma. It may also slow the body's response to low blood sugar in diabetics on insulin.

## QUICK REFERENCE

**Drug group** Beta blocker (p.55)

**Overdose danger rating** High

**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, SR tablets, injection.

### Frequency and timing of doses

1-2 x daily (hypertension); 2-3 x daily (angina/arrhythmias); 4 x daily for 2 days, then 2 x daily (heart attack prevention); 2 x daily (migraine prevention); 4 x daily (hyperthyroidism).

### Adult dosage range

100-200mg daily.

### Onset of effect

1-2 hours.

### Duration of action

3-7 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. Stopping suddenly may lead to worsening of the underlying condition.

## OVERDOSE ACTION



Seek immediate medical advice in all cases. Take emergency action if breathing difficulties, collapse, or loss of consciousness occur.

See **Drug poisoning emergency guide (p.510)**.

## SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

### Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have liver or kidney problems.
- You have asthma, bronchitis, or emphysema.
- You have heart problems.
- You have diabetes.
- You have psoriasis.
- You have phaeochromocytoma (a type of adrenal gland tumour).
- You are taking other medicines.



### Pregnancy

Not usually prescribed. May affect the baby. Discuss with your doctor.



### Breast-feeding

The drug passes into the breast milk, but at normal doses adverse effects on the baby are unlikely. Discuss with your doctor.



### Infants and children

Not recommended.



### Over 60

Reduced doses necessary. There may be an increased risk of adverse effects.



### Driving and hazardous work

Avoid such activities until you have learned how metoprolol affects you because the drug can cause fatigue, dizziness, and drowsiness.



### Alcohol

Avoid excessive intake. Alcohol may increase the blood-pressure-lowering effects of metoprolol.

### Surgery and general anaesthetics

Occasionally, metoprolol may need to be stopped before you have a general anaesthetic; but only do this after discussion with your doctor or dentist.

## POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

Metoprolol's adverse effects are common to most beta blockers and tend to diminish with

long-term use. Fainting may be a sign that the drug has slowed the heart beat excessively.

Symptom/effect	Frequency		Discuss with doctor		Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
	Common	Rare	Only if severe	In all cases		
Lethargy/fatigue	●			●		
Cold hands and feet	●			●		
Nausea/vomiting		●		●		
Nightmares/vivid dreams		●		●	●	
Rash/dry eyes		●		●	●	
Visual disturbances		●		●	●	
Fainting/palpitations		●		●	●	●
Breathlessness/wheeze		●		●	●	●

## INTERACTIONS

**Antihypertensive drugs** Metoprolol may enhance the blood-pressure-lowering effect.

**Calcium channel blockers** may cause low blood pressure, a slow heartbeat, and heart failure if used with metoprolol.

**Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)** may reduce the antihypertensive effect of metoprolol.

**Cardiac glycosides (e.g. digoxin)** may increase the heart-slowing effect of metoprolol.

**Antidiabetic drugs** Taken with metoprolol, these drugs may increase the risk of low blood sugar or mask its symptoms.

**Antacids** may increase the effects of metoprolol.

## PROLONGED USE

No special problems.