

Inhaled Corticosteroids for Asthma

Corticosteroids (CORE-te-co-STAIR-oids), also called inhaled steroids, are medicines that prevent asthma flare-ups. Your child breathes them into the lungs. They are also called controller medicines because they help control asthma symptoms. They must be used every day. Symptoms should get better in 2 to 3 weeks.

Brand Names for this Medicine

Single Agent Inhalers

- Qvar® Redihaler® (beclomethasone)
- Flovent® (fluticasone) HFA
- Pulmicort® Flexhaler® (budesonide)
- Pulmicort® Respules® (budesonide)
- Asmanex® Twisthaler® (mometasone)
- Asmanex® (mometasone) HFA
- Alvesco® (ciclesonide) HFA

Combination Inhalers

- Advair Diskus® (fluticasone/salmeterol)
- Advair® (fluticasone/salmeterol) HFA
- AirDuo® Digihaler® (fluticasone/salmeterol)
- AirDuo® RespiClick® (fluticasone/salmeterol)
- Wixela Inhub® (fluticasone/salmeterol)
- Breo® Ellipta® (fluticasone/vilanterol)
- Dulera® (mometasone/formoterol) HFA
- Symbicort® (budesonide/formoterol) HFA

How this Medicine Works

Your child breathes these medicines into their lungs to treat asthma. They help reduce swelling in the airways on a daily basis and help prevent flare-ups. They may not help your child during an asthma flare-up, but they should still use the medicine during episodes that have increased symptoms.

During an asthma flare-up, your child must also use a rescue inhaler like albuterol (ProAir® HFA, Proventil® HFA, or Ventolin® HFA) if they are having asthma symptoms.

How to Give this Medicine

- Read the label carefully and make sure you are giving your child the right dose. It is easy to confuse the many different dosage forms and strengths.
- Give the exact dose of medicine that your child's health care provider ordered.
- HFA inhalers are usually given with a spacer device, such as an AeroChamber® or OptiChamber®.
- Stay with your child until they have used the right dose of medicine.
- Shake this medicine before giving if it is a metered dose inhaler or a liquid nebulizer.
- Do not shake this medicine if it is a dry powder inhaler.
- Give the medicine every day, as ordered (once or twice daily), even if your child is feeling fine. Do not change doses or stop the medicine without talking to your child's health care provider.
- After each dose, your child should rinse their mouth with water or brush their teeth to wash the steroid medicine out of their mouth.
- Keep a record of when the medicine is given and how many doses are left.
- Refill this prescription at least 5 days before the last dose is given. This is very important.

If You Forget to Give a Dose

If you forget to give a dose, give it as soon as possible. If it is less than 5 hours before the next dose, **do not** give the missed dose at all. **Do not** double the next dose.

Instead, go back to your child's regular dosing schedule. If you have any questions about this, check with your child's health care provider or pharmacist.

Medicine Storage

- Store all medicine out of the reach of children.
- Keep the bottle tightly closed and store it in a dark, dry place. Do not keep it in the bathroom or above the kitchen sink. This medicine does not work as well when kept in a light or humid place.
- Do not keep this medicine in the refrigerator. Store it at room temperature.
- Keep this medicine away from heat or direct sunlight.
- Do not use this medicine after the expiration date printed on the container.
- Check the label on your child's medicine. Each medicine container may have directions to throw it away after being open for 30 to 60 days, even if the medicine is not gone.

Drug Interactions

This medicine **should not** be taken with these foods, products, or medicines:

- Tobacco products – Your child should not smoke or vape. Smoking and vaping irritates the lungs and makes asthma worse. No one should smoke or vape around your child because of the dangers of second-hand smoke. This includes medicinal or recreational marijuana, THC, and CBD products.
- If your child is taking any other medicine or herbal supplements, tell their health care provider and pharmacist. Some medicines for diabetes and diuretics (water pills) may affect how inhaled steroids control your child's asthma.

Warnings

- If your child is allergic to the ingredients in these medicines, they should not take the medicine. Call the health care provider right away.
- Asthma is a disease that always changes. If asthma symptoms seem to be getting worse, call the health care provider.

Special Note for Female Patients

- If a patient thinks they might be pregnant, tell the health care provider before taking this or any other medicine.
- If a patient is breastfeeding, they should tell their health care provider before taking this or any other medicine.

Possible Side Effects

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| • sore throat | • thrush (white spots on mouth) |
| • dry mouth | • hoarse voice |

What to Do About Side Effects

- If a skin rash occurs, call your child's health care provider.
- Your child should brush their teeth or drink water after each dose. This will prevent thrush and a sore throat.

When to Call for Emergency Help

Call for emergency help if:

- Your child has any signs of an allergic reaction, such as:
 - trouble breathing
 - swelling of the tongue
 - swelling of hands, feet, or ankles
- Your child's breathing is not getting better during an asthma flare-up.
- Your child's lips or fingernails turn blue or gray.

When to Call the Health Care Provider

Call your child's health care provider if they are:

- Having a severe asthma attack.
- Exposed to chickenpox or shingles.
- Having any side effects that continue or are very bothersome.

Other Advice About the Medicine

- Do not stop giving this medicine or change the amount given without talking with your child's health care provider or pharmacist first. Taking the same amount of medicine at the same times every day helps control your child's asthma symptoms and prevents an asthma flare-up.
- Tell your health care provider and pharmacist if your child has an allergic reaction to any medicine.
- If you carry any medicine in your purse, keep it in its childproof bottle. Keep your purse out of the reach of children.
- Take all your child's medicines with you in the original bottles whenever they see a health care provider, go to an emergency room or is admitted to the hospital. This helps providers who may not know your child.
- Learn the name, spelling and dose of this medicine. Also, teach your child if they are old enough. You will need to know this information when you call your child's health care provider or pharmacist.
- If your child takes too much of this medicine, or if someone else takes this medicine, first call the Central Ohio Poison Center at 1 (800) 222-1222 (ITY 614-228-2272). They will tell you what to do.

- This medicine is prescribed for your child only. Do not give it to anyone else.
- Do not give expired medicine. Call your health care provider's office if refills are needed.
- When your child goes to the dentist, be sure to tell the dentist what medicines they are taking and why.
- Tell your child's teacher, school nurse, coach, babysitter, and others that they are taking this medicine and what side effects to watch for.

Follow-up Visits

- If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child's health care provider or pharmacist.
- You can expect to have regular follow-up visits with your child's health care provider every 3 to 6 months.
- Write down all your questions as you think of them. Bring this list with you when you see the health care provider.
- Keep a record of asthma flare-ups and possible triggers. Bring this with you when you see the health care provider.
- Call the health care provider if you cannot keep an appointment.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child's health care provider, nurse or pharmacist.