

Acarbose

Medication Information Leaflet



What is this medication for?

Acarbose is used to manage diabetes by slowing down the breakdown of carbohydrates to simple sugars. It slows down the absorption of glucose from the digestive system and thus prevents the rise of blood sugar after a meal.

How should I take/use this medication?

Swallow the tablet whole with a glass of water immediately before the meal or chew the tablet with the first mouthful of food.

What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

If you miss a dose, take your next dose immediately before your next meal and skip the dose you missed. Do not double your dose or use extra medication to make up for the missed dose.

What precautions should I take?

Inform your doctor if

- you are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication
- you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding
- you have a heart condition, kidney or liver problem
- you drink alcohol often
- you are eating less than usual due to sickness/ changed diet as your dosage may need to be changed

If your doctor has informed you that you need to do a fasting blood test, skip your medication until after you have your blood taken and are ready to eat.

What are some side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

Very rarely, this medication can injure or damage the liver. Stop this medication and see a doctor immediately if you notice dark brown urine or light coloured stools (pale grey/ clay coloured) , or if you experience nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, stomach pain or yellowing of your eyes or skin.

What are some other side-effects of this medication?

Flatulence (passing gas or wind) is a common side effect that patients experience with this medication. It may also cause stomach discomfort, bloating or diarrhoea. However, these symptoms should get better over time. Check with your doctor if any of these symptoms are serious or do not go away.

What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?

Avoid taking alcohol with this medication.

Avoid food and drink containing sucrose or cane sugar while you are on this medication, as they can often cause stomach discomfort and diarrhoea due to the increased carbohydrate breakdown in the large intestine.

How should I store this medication?

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

How should I dispose of this medication safely?

Pack this medicine into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

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