

Bethanechol

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Bethanechol is used to treat urinary retention (difficulty passing urine) caused by surgery, drugs or other factors. It helps the bladder muscle to squeeze better, and improve your ability to pass urine.

How should I take/use this medication?

- Do not stop taking your medication without checking with your healthcare professional.
- This medication should be taken one hour before meals or two hours after meals to reduce nausea and vomiting
- This medication is usually taken three to four times daily.

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

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Then take your next dose at the usual time. Do not take two doses to make up for the missed dose.

What precautions should I take?

Inform your healthcare professional 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 recently went for bladder or intestinal surgery
- You have or ever had:
 - Asthma
 - Parkinson's disease
 - Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid gland)
 - Epilepsy (fits)
 - Stomach ulcers
 - Slow heart rate or low blood pressure
 - Heart problems such as blockage of arteries in your heart

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Drowsiness
 - This may affect your ability to drive and use machinery. Do not drive or do things which requires you to be alert.
- Facial flushing where the skin on your face feels hot
- Nausea, vomiting
 - Take small but frequent meals, and avoid fatty or spicy food.
- Headache
 - You may take Paracetamol to relieve the headache.
- Sweating
- Slower heart rate

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

Consult your healthcare professional immediately if you experience slow heart rate of less than 50 beats per minute, shortness of breath or fainting.

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

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

Avoid drinking alcohol as it may increase the risk of drowsiness.

Inform your healthcare professional if you are taking or intend to take any other medication, supplements, traditional medications or herbal remedies.

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 throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication 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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