

Acarbose

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Acarbose is used in the treatment of diabetes. It works together with lifestyle changes, such as having a healthy diet and regular exercise, to reduce blood sugar levels. It works by slowing down the breakdown of carbohydrates from our diet to simple sugars.

Carbohydrates are a type of nutrient found in starchy foods such as bread, noodles, potatoes and rice. Absorption of sugar from the digestive system is slowed down. This 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 a 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 missed 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 healthcare professional if you:

- Are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication
- Are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding
- Have any heart, kidney or liver problems
- Drink alcohol often
- Have chronic intestinal disorders such as recurrent intestinal obstruction, inflammatory bowel disease

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 common side effects of this medication?

Consult your healthcare professional if any of the side effects becomes severe and bothersome.

The common side effects of Acarbose include:

- Flatulence (passing gas or wind)
- Stomach discomfort, bloating
- Diarrhoea

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

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.

If the following serious side effects happen, you should consult your healthcare professional immediately:

- Liver problems: Dark-coloured urine or light-coloured stools, yellowing of your eyes or skin, severe loss of appetite, stomach pain, nausea, or vomiting that does not go away

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

Avoid taking alcohol with this medication as this may increase your risk of having low blood sugar.

Avoid food and drinks 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 throw away this medication safely ?

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

Also available in [中文](#) | [Melayu](#) | [தமிழ்](#).

Disclaimers

Please take note that the above is not a complete list of all possible side effects. If you have any concerns about your medication or if you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medication, please consult your doctor or pharmacist.

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, and supported by the Ministry of Health. 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. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.

Please visit www.moh.gov.sg/knowyourmeds and www.ndf.gov.sg for more information on medication.

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