

Diuretics

Most common Diuretics

- Ask your health care provider to check off the one you are taking.
 - Furosemide (Lasix)
 - Metolazone (Zaroxolyn)
 - Hydrochlorothiazide (HydroDIURIL, Moduret)
 - Bumetanide (Burinex)
 - Other _____

What are Diuretics?

Diuretics are medications that help your kidneys get rid of any extra water and extra salt in your body. Many people call these medications ‘water-pills’.

What are Diuretics used for?

- Heart failure
- High blood pressure
- Other health problems that cause fluid to build-up in the body

How do Diuretics help with my heart failure?

Diuretics can:

- Lower your blood pressure so your heart doesn’t have to work as hard
- Prevent or reduce shortness of breath, swelling and bloating
- Help you urinate (‘go pee’) more so your body has less fluid and your heart doesn’t have to work as hard to pump
- Improve your quality of life

What if you miss taking a dose?

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip taking the dose you missed and just take your next scheduled dose.

Never take two doses at the same time.

If you have questions about taking your medications, or missed doses, contact your pharmacist, your health care provider. In British Columbia, you can also call 8-1-1.

Do not take any of the following without checking with your health care provider

- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Cough or cold medicines
- ✗ Black licorice
- ✗ Herbal products
- ✗ Chinese medicines
- ✗ Anti-inflammatory medicines (such as Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxen, Aleve, Celebrex)
- ✗ Other medicines you can buy at a pharmacy

Health Care Provider contact information

To learn more about diuretics, go to the HealthLinkBC web site (www.healthlinkbc.ca) or call 8-1-1.

Common Side Effects

Always tell your health care provider if you have any side effects.

- Urinating or going pee often
This can last up to 4 hours after you take your diuretic.

- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded

- Loss of potassium and sodium (salt) which could cause:

- irregular heartbeat
- muscle cramps
- blurred vision
- confusion
- headache



- Feeling sick to your stomach (nauseated) or not having an appetite

- Feeling very tired or weak

- Skin rash

- Dehydration (when you have lost too much fluid).

You are dehydrated if you notice you have a really dry mouth, you are very thirsty, your urine (pee) is dark-coloured, or you are extremely dizzy.



Contact your health care provider right away if side effects do not go away or get worse.

Medication Tips

- ♥ While taking a diuretic, weigh yourself every day and record your weight.
Call your health care provider if you gain more than 4 lbs (2 kg) in 2 days or 5 lbs (2.5 kg) in 1 week.

- ♥ Always check with your health care provider before you stop taking your diuretic. If you stop taking your diuretic, your heart failure could get worse.

- ♥ Drink no more than 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid each day.
1.5-2.0 litres = 48-64 ounces = 6-8 glasses
(Refer to [Limiting Fluid resource](#) to learn more)

- ♥ If you get an upset stomach from taking your diuretic, take your pills with meals.

- ♥ Get up slowly when changing position such as moving from lying to sitting and sitting to standing.

- ♥ Balance rest with activity to conserve your energy.

- ♥ Take your last dose before 5:00 p.m. so you don't have to get up often during the night.

- ♥ Limit the amount of time you spend in the sun and always wear sun screen (even on cloudy days).

- ♥ Always tell your health care provider if you are taking high blood pressure medications, digoxin, anti inflammatory medication, or steroids.

- ♥ Always tell your health care provider you have diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease, or gout.

- ♥ Check your blood pressure at least once a week or have it checked by your health care provider.

- ♥ Make sure your blood is tested regularly to check the levels of potassium and sodium, and to check your kidney function.

- ♥ If you have low blood pressure, do not do anything that can lower your blood pressure even more.
 - ✗ Do not drink alcohol.
 - ✗ Do not do any heavy exercise.
 - ✗ Do not take really hot showers or baths, or use a hot tub.