



## ACE Inhibitors

### Most common ACE Inhibitors

Ask your health care provider to check off the one you are taking.

- Ramipril (Altace)
- Perindopril (Coversyl)
- Trandolapril (Mavik)
- Enalapril (Vasotec)
- Lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril)
- Quinapril (Accupril)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### What are ACE Inhibitors?

ACE Inhibitors are a group of medications that keep your body from making stress hormones. Stress hormones constrict or narrow blood vessels making it harder for your heart to pump blood around your body.

ACE Inhibitors cause blood vessels to relax, allowing your blood to flow more easily. This reduces the work of your heart and lowers your blood pressure.

### What are ACE Inhibitors used for?

ACE Inhibitors are used to treat:

- Heart failure
- High blood pressure

ACE Inhibitors also help:

- Prevent kidney damage in people with diabetes or at risk for kidney disease
- The heart recover after a heart attack

### How do ACE Inhibitors help with heart failure?

ACE Inhibitors may:

- Slow the progress of your heart failure
- Help you live longer
- Improve your quality of life
- Prevent you from needing to be in the hospital for HF treatment

When used as a part of your heart failure treatment plan along with your other heart failure medications, ACE

Inhibitors might help:

- Lessen your shortness of breath
- Reduce the swelling in your legs and belly
- Increase your energy



### 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, or in British Columbia 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 or Chinese medicines
- ✗ Aboriginal herbs
- ✗ Anti-inflammatory medicines (such as Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxen, Aleve, Celebrex)

Common Side Effects	What to do
Dry cough 	This might go away after a while.  If your cough gets worse or becomes a problem for you, contact your health care provider.
Skin rash Itchiness Fever and chills	Contact your health care provider if these side effects do not go away within 2 days of starting the medication.
Dizzy Lightheaded 	When changing position such as moving from lying to sitting and sitting to standing, get up slowly.  Contact your health care provider if these side effects continue or get worse.
Serious but not Common Side Effects	
Swelling of your face, lips, tongue Trouble breathing, Difficulty swallowing	Stop taking the ACE Inhibitor.  Contact your doctor right away or go to your nearest emergency department.

### Medication Tips

- ♥ ACE Inhibitors might make you dizzy or lightheaded for the first few days, but this usually improves over time.

  - If your dizziness does not get better, your health care provider might need to change the type or amount of ACE Inhibitor you are taking.
- ♥ It can take several weeks, and sometimes months, before you notice an improvement in your heart failure.
- ♥ ACE Inhibitors could increase the potassium level in your body. Do not take potassium supplements unless prescribed by your health-care provider.

  - Check with your health care provider before using products that contain potassium such as salt substitutes.
- ♥ If you have low blood pressure, do not do anything that can lower your blood pressure even further:

  - ✗ Do not drink alcohol.
  - ✗ Do not do any strenuous exercise.
  - ✗ Do not take a really hot shower or bath, or use a hot tub.
- ♥ If your medication dose is being increased or decreased, your health care provider will want to do a blood test to check your potassium level and kidney function.
- ♥ Contact your health care provider if you have diarrhea and/or vomiting that lasts more than two days.

  - This can cause you to lose too much water and could cause problems with your kidneys.

For more about ACE Inhibitors, go the HealthLinkBC web site ([www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)) or call 8-1-1