
PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Epoprostenol

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Flolan; Veletri

Brand Names: Canada

Caripul; Flolan

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure in the lungs.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has heart failure (weak heart).
- If your child has ever gotten fluid in the lungs with use of this drug.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for your child to take this drug with all of his/her drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles.
- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush.
- Have your child's blood pressure checked as you have been told.

- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden without calling the doctor. Signs of high pressure in the lungs like shortness of breath, dizziness, or weakness may get worse. Talk with the doctor.
- Always have a backup system close by in case you need to use it.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit

that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.

- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Shortness of breath.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Very bad headache.
- Dark urine.
- Chest pain or pressure or a fast heartbeat.
- Slow heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Pale skin.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble controlling body movements.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- A burning or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Swelling of belly.
- Skin sores.

- Very bad irritation where the shot was given.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Anxiety.
- Back pain.
- Pain where the shot was given.
- Headache.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Diarrhea.
- Dizziness.
- Flushing.
- Not hungry.
- Jaw pain.
- Bone, joint, or muscle pain.
- Flu-like signs. These include headache, weakness, fever, shakes, aches, pains, and sweating.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given into the vein nonstop.
- It is likely that treatment will be needed for a long time, maybe years. You will need to closely follow how to use this drug and how to care for the catheter and infusion pump. Talk with the doctor if you have questions.
- Your child's doctor may teach you how to give this drug.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Be sure you know what types of materials and tubing to use with this drug. If you are not sure, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- It is important that the infusion does not stop unless your child's doctor tells you otherwise. If your child misses a dose or

if the infusion stops, get medical help right away.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store as you have been told by the doctor.
- After opening or mixing this drug with fluids, be sure you know how to store this drug and how long the drug is good for.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

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If you have any questions or concerns, talk with a member of your healthcare team. You can reach them Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at _____ . After 5:00 PM, during the weekend, and on holidays, please call _____. If there's no number listed, or you're not sure, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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