PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Sotalol

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Betapace; Betapace AF; Sorine [DSC]; Sotylize

Brand Names: Canada

AMB-Sotalol; APO-Sotalol; JAMP-Sotalol [DSC]; MED Sotalol; PMS-Sotalol; RATIO-Sotalol

Warning

- This drug may cause a life-threatening type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). Talk with the doctor if your child has a long QT on ECG.
- Your child will have to start and restart this drug in a setting where your child's heart can be watched nonstop. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has kidney disease, talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat certain types of life-threatening abnormal heartbeats.
- It is used to keep a normal heartbeat in people who have a certain type of abnormal heartbeat (atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter).

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 any of these health problems: Asthma or other lung or breathing problems that cause shortness of breath or wheezing, heart failure (weak heart), certain types of abnormal heartbeats called heart block or sick sinus syndrome, or a slow heartbeat.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Low potassium or magnesium levels.
- If your child is taking any drugs used for a heartbeat that is not normal.
- If your child is taking any drugs that can cause a certain type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). There are many drugs that can do this. Ask the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking 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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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.

- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, have your child rise slowly if your child has been sitting or lying down. Have your child be careful going up and down stairs.
- Have your child's blood pressure and heart rate checked often.
- Have your child's blood work checked and an ECG (to see how your child's heart beats) as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- This drug may prevent some signs of low blood sugar like fast heartbeat. This may raise the risk of severe or long-lasting low blood sugar, especially in people with diabetes, children, and people who are fasting. This includes people who are having surgery, are not eating like normal, or are throwing up. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your child's blood sugar closely.
- Tell the doctor if your child sweats more than usual or has fluid loss, diarrhea, increased thirst, throwing up; or decreased appetite.
- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden. If you do, chest pain that is worse and in some cases heart attack may occur. The chance may be higher if your child has certain types of heart disease. To avoid side effects, you will want to slowly stop this drug as ordered by the doctor. Call the doctor right away if your child has new or worse chest pain or if other heart problems happen.
- This drug may make it harder to tell if your child has signs of an overactive thyroid like fast heartbeat. If your child has an overactive thyroid and stops taking this drug all of a sudden, it may get worse and could be life-threatening. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has had a very bad allergic reaction, talk with the doctor. Your

child may have a chance of an even worse reaction if your child comes into contact with what caused the allergy. If your child uses epinephrine to treat very bad allergic reactions, talk with the doctor. Epinephrine may not work as well while your child is taking this drug.

- The chance of side effects may be higher in female patients. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is pregnant:

- Tell the doctor if your child is pregnant or becomes pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of your child using this drug while pregnant.

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:

All products:

- 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.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Fast or slow heartbeat.
- An abnormal heartbeat that is new or worse.
- Sweating a lot.
- Change in eyesight.
- Heart failure has happened with this drug, as well as heart failure that has

gotten worse in people who already have it. Tell the doctor if your child has heart disease. Call the doctor right away if your child has shortness of breath, a big weight gain, a heartbeat that is not normal, or swelling in the arms or legs that is new or worse.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Not able to get or keep an erection.

Injection:

- Pain, swelling, or other reaction where the injection 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:

- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up.

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?

All oral products:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

Tablets:

- A liquid (suspension) can be made if your child cannot swallow pills. Talk with your child's doctor or pharmacist.
- If a liquid (suspension) is made, shake well before use.

All liquid products:

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.
- Do not use a household teaspoon or tablespoon to measure this drug. Doing so could lead to the dose being too high.

Injection:

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

All oral products:

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses or extra doses.

Injection:

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

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

All oral products:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Tablets:

- If a liquid (suspension) is made from the tablets, store at room temperature. Throw away any part not used after 3 months.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- 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.

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This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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