



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Salmeterol

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

Serevent Diskus

Brand Names: Canada

Serevent Diskhaler Disks [DSC]; Serevent Diskus

Warning

- Drugs like this one may raise the chance of asthma-related deaths in people with asthma who do **not** also use an inhaled steroid. It appears that this effect does not apply to people with COPD. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Drugs like this one may raise the chance of asthma-related hospital stays in children and teenagers with asthma who do **not** also use an inhaled steroid. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Do not give this drug to treat asthma if your child is **not** also using an inhaled steroid. Do not give this drug to treat asthma if your child's asthma is well controlled by an inhaled

steroid.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat asthma.
- It is used to prevent breathing problems that happen with exercise.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug is not to be used to treat intense flare-ups of shortness of breath. Use a rescue inhaler. Talk with the doctor.

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

- If your child is allergic to milk, talk with the doctor.
- 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 is using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your child's doctor or pharmacist.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Atazanavir, clarithromycin, indinavir, itraconazole, ketoconazole, nefazodone, nelfinavir, ritonavir, saquinavir, or telithromycin.

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.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), talk with the doctor. This drug can raise blood sugar.
- Have your child's blood pressure checked as you have been told.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has breathing problems that get worse, if the rescue inhaler does not work as well, or if your child needs to use the rescue inhaler more often.
- Do not give more of this drug or have your child use it more often than you were told. Deaths have happened when too much of this type of drug has been taken. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.

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 high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, more thirst, more hungry, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Signs of low potassium levels like muscle pain or weakness, muscle cramps, or a heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Signs of high or low blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Very nervous and excitable.

- Shakiness.
- Fever.
- Seizures.
- Very upset stomach or throwing up.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Trouble sleeping.
- This drug can cause very bad breathing problems right after your child takes a dose. Sometimes, this may be life-threatening. If your child has trouble breathing, breathing that is worse, wheezing, or coughing after using this drug, have your child use a rescue inhaler and get medical help right away.

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:

- Headache.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Flu-like signs.

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.

- For breathing in only by an inhaler into the lungs.
- Use as you have been told, even if your child feels well.
- Do not take the device apart or wash it. Do not use it with a spacer. Be sure your child does not breathe out into the device.
- Close the device after each dose. Do not open the device unless a dose is being used.
- If your child uses this drug to prevent exercise-induced breathing problems, give at least 30 minutes before your child exercises. Do not give another dose for at least 12 hours.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- Do not give more than 2 doses a day.

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

- Store at room temperature.
- Store in foil pouch until ready for use.

- After opening, throw away any part not used after 6 weeks or when the indicator reads zero, whichever comes first.
- Protect from heat and sunlight.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- 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, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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