

BRONCHODILATORS

QUICK RELIEF ASTHMA MEDICINE

When a person has asthma, the airways are very sensitive to irritants and allergens. During an asthma episode, the airways become swollen and the muscles in and around the airways tighten. Quick relief medicines, called "bronchodilators," quickly relax the tightened muscles, allowing more air to go through the lungs.

Bronchodilators are quick relief medicines – they temporarily relieve asthma symptoms, but they do not reduce or prevent the swelling inside the airways that causes the symptoms.

If you are not using a long term control medicine and have to use your quick relief medicine more than twice a week, your asthma may be getting worse. You may need a long term control medicine to control swelling. You should discuss this with your doctor.

How are bronchodilators taken?

The best way to take a bronchodilator is to use an inhaler (or pump) with a spacer. A spacer is a plastic tube or bag that you attach to your pump to help get the medicine to your airways. One brand of bronchodilator for children over 12 years old is a dry powder inhaler and does not require the use of a spacer.

Exercise Induced Asthma

Bronchodilators are often prescribed for use before exercising.

Side Effects:

The side effects of bronchodilators may include rapid heartbeat, tremors, feeling anxious, and nausea. Serious side effects are rare, but may include chest pain, fast or irregular heart beat, severe headache or feeling dizzy, severe nausea, or vomiting. Call your doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms.

SOME COMMON BRAND NAMES OF QUICK RELIEF MEDICINES

(Generic names in parentheses)

Albuterol

(Albuterol is a generic name)

Proventil HFA

(Albuterol)

Proventil

(Albuterol)

Ventolin

(Albuterol)

LESS COMMON BRAND NAMES OF QUICK RELIEF MEDICINES

(Generic names in parentheses)

Alupent

(Metaproterenol sulfate)

Atrovent

(Ipratropium bromide)

Brethine

(Terbutaline sulfate)

Maxair

(Pirbuterol)

Tornalate

(Bitolterol)

Volmax

(Albuterol)

Xopenex

(Levalbuterol)

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