

Bicard 2.5, Bicard 5 and Bicard 10 tablets

bisoprolol fumarate

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about bisoprolol fumarate. It does not contain all of the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have benefits and risks. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking bisoprolol fumarate against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with your medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What BICARD is used for

The name of your medicine is Bicard 2.5, 5 and 10. It contains the active ingredient, bisoprolol fumarate. It is used to treat heart failure. It is usually used in combination with other medicines.

Heart failure occurs when the heart muscle is weak and unable to pump enough blood to supply the body's needs. Heart failure may start off with no symptoms, but as the condition progresses patients may feel short of breath and notice swelling of the feet and ankles due to fluid build-up.

Bisoprolol fumarate belongs to a group of medicines called beta-blockers. These medicines work by affecting the body's response to some nerve impulses, especially in the heart. As a result, it decreases the heart's need for blood and oxygen and therefore reduces the amount of work the heart must do. Bisoprolol fumarate also slows your heart rate, which in turn increases the efficiency of your heart.

Bisoprolol fumarate can help to reduce the number of heart failure episodes needing hospital admission and the risk of sudden death.

Your doctor may have prescribed this medicine for another reason.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why bisoprolol fumarate has been prescribed for you.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

There is no evidence that bisoprolol fumarate is addictive.

Use in children

Bisoprolol fumarate is not recommended for use in children, as the safety and efficacy in children has not been established.

Before you take it

When you must not take it

Do not take BICARD if you are allergic to medicines containing bisoprolol fumarate or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include skin rash, itching or hives, swelling of the face, lips or tongue which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing, wheezing or shortness of breath.

Do not take BICARD if you have any of the following heart problems:

- severe heart failure that is not controlled medically
- worsening heart failure requiring injection of medicines into a vein
- cardiogenic shock, a serious heart condition causing low blood pressure and circulatory failure
- certain heart conditions where the electrical activity controlling your heart rate does not work properly, causing a very slow heart rate or uneven heart beating
- low blood pressure.

Do not take this medicine if you have any of the following medical conditions:

- severe asthma or severe chronic obstructive lung disease
- severe blood circulation problems in your limbs (such as Raynaud's syndrome), which may cause your fingers and toes to tingle or turn pale or blue
- untreated phaeochromocytoma, a rare tumour of the adrenal gland
- metabolic acidosis, a condition when there is too much acid in the blood.

Do not take this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

Bisoprolol fumarate may affect your developing baby if you take it during pregnancy. Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits of taking bisoprolol fumarate during pregnancy.

Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding or wish to breastfeed.

Like most beta-blocker medicines bisoprolol fumarate is not recommended while you are breastfeeding. Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits of taking bisoprolol fumarate when breastfeeding.

Tell your doctor if you have, or have had, any of the following medical conditions:

- asthma, difficulty breathing or other lung problems
- certain heart diseases (such as disturbances in heart rhythm or Prinzmetal angina)
- diabetes
- any allergic conditions
- psoriasis, a skin disease with thickened patches of red skin, often with silvery scales
- thyroid disorder
- any blood vessel disorder causing poor circulation in the arms and legs
- kidney problems
- liver problems
- phaeochromocytoma, a rare tumour of the adrenal gland
- currently following a strict fasting diet.

Your doctor may want to take special care if you have any of these conditions.

Tell your doctor if you are going to have anaesthesia (for example, for surgery). Bisoprolol fumarate may influence how your body reacts to this situation.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start taking BICARD.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including those you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines and BICARD may interfere with each other.

Do not take the following medicines with BICARD without special advice from your doctor:

- certain anti-arrhythmic medicines such as disopyramide, lidocaine, phenytoin or flecainide (used to treat irregular or abnormal heartbeat)
- certain calcium antagonists such as diltiazem or verapamil (used to treat high blood pressure and angina)
- certain medicines used to treat high blood pressure such as clonidine, methyl dopa or moxonidine.

However, do not stop taking these medicines without checking with your doctor.

Check with your doctor before taking the following medicines with BICARD.

Your doctor may need to check your condition more frequently:

- anti-arrhythmic medicines such as amiodarone (used to treat irregular or abnormal heartbeat)
- calcium antagonists such as felodipine or amlodipine (used to treat high blood pressure and angina)
- certain medicines used to treat arthritis, pain or inflammation, such as ibuprofen or diclofenac
- eye drops for glaucoma treatment
- insulin and oral drugs for diabetes
- anaesthetic agents used in surgery
- digoxin, a medicine used to treat heart failure
- ergot derivatives, medicines commonly used to treat migraines
- rifampicin, a medicine used to treat tuberculosis
- tricyclic antidepressants
- barbiturates, medicines used to treat epilepsy
- phenothiazines, medicines used to treat some mental conditions
- mefloquine, a medicine used to treat malaria
- adrenaline, a medicine used to treat allergic reactions
- certain medicines used to treat depression called monoamine oxidase inhibitors, such as phenelzine or tranlycypromine.

These medicines may be affected by BICARD or may affect how well it works.

You may need different amounts of your medicines, or you may need to take different medicines.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking BICARD.

How to take it

How much to take

The usual starting dose is 1.25 mg once daily for one week. If well tolerated, your doctor will gradually increase your dose over the next ten weeks. The usual maintenance therapy is 10 mg once daily.

If your condition gets worse or you no longer tolerate the drug, it may be necessary to reduce the dose again or interrupt treatment. In some patients a maintenance dose lower than 10 mg may be sufficient. Your doctor will tell you what to do.

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

How to take it

Swallow the tablets whole with a full glass of water.

Do not crush or chew the tablets.

If you crush or chew the tablets, they will not work as well.

When to take it

Take BICARD in the morning, with or without food.

How long to take it for

To properly control your condition, BICARD must be taken every day, usually as a long-term treatment.

Keep taking it for as long as your doctor recommends.

It is very important that you do not stop taking BICARD suddenly.

If you forget to take it

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking your tablets as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose you missed.

If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) for advice or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much bisoprolol fumarate. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Symptoms of an overdose may include slowed heart rate, difficulty breathing, marked drop in blood pressure, severe heart failure, or a decrease in blood sugar.

While you are taking it

Things you must do

Before starting any new medicine, tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are taking BICARD.

Tell all the doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking this medicine.

If you become pregnant while taking it, tell your doctor immediately.

If you are going to have surgery, including dental surgery, tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking BICARD.

If you are being treated for diabetes, make sure you check your blood sugar level regularly and report any changes to your doctor.

BICARD may change how well your diabetes is controlled. It may also cover up some of the symptoms of low blood sugar, called hypoglycaemia, such as fast heartbeat. Bisoprolol fumarate may make hypoglycaemia last longer. Your dose of diabetic medicines, including insulin, may need to change.

If you are to have any medical tests, tell your doctor that you are taking BICARD.

It may affect the results of some tests.

Visit your doctor regularly so they can check on your progress.

Your doctor may check your eyes, thyroid, lipid and blood glucose levels.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken your medicine exactly as prescribed.

Your doctor may think it is not working effectively and change your treatment unnecessarily.

Things you must not do

Do not stop taking BICARD or lower the dose without checking with your doctor.

Stopping treatment suddenly may cause your condition to worsen or other heart complications may occur.

If you have to stop treatment, your doctor will usually advise you to reduce the dose gradually.

Do not take BICARD to treat any other conditions unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not give your medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how BICARD affects you.

This medicine may cause tiredness, dizziness or light-headedness in some people, especially after the first dose. If any of these occur, do not drive, operate machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous.

Be careful getting up from a sitting or lying position.

Dizziness, light-headedness or fainting may occur, especially when you get up quickly. Getting up slowly may help.

Suggestions to help manage your condition:

- Physical activity - regular exercise when symptoms are absent or mild helps improve heart function. Before starting any exercise, ask your doctor for advice.
- Weight reduction - your doctor may suggest losing some weight to help lessen the amount of work your heart has to do.
- Diet - eat a healthy, low fat diet which includes plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, cereals and fish. Also, try to eat less fat and sugar.

- Salt restriction - too much salt can make your heart failure worse. Try to avoid using salt in cooking and at the table.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking BICARD.

BICARD helps most people with heart failure, but it may have unwanted side effects in some people.

All medicines can have side effects.

Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some of the side effects.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- tiredness, feeling weak
- dizziness
- headache
- sleep disturbances, nightmares
- nausea, vomiting
- diarrhoea, constipation
- feeling of coldness or numbness in hands or feet
- allergic runny nose
- hair loss
- sexual problems, including erectile dysfunction.

Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:

- muscular weakness or cramps
- dizziness or light-headedness (sometimes with fainting), especially on standing up, which may be due to low blood pressure
- a very slow heartbeat
- hallucinations
- depression
- irritation or redness of the eye
- skin reactions such as rash, flush, itching, worsening of psoriasis
- difficulty hearing.

The above list includes serious side effects that may require medical attention.

Tell your doctor immediately, or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:

- swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat which may cause difficulty breathing or swallowing
- signs of worsening heart failure such as shortness of breath, sometimes with tiredness or weakness, swelling of the feet or legs due to fluid build up
- chest tightness, wheezing, rattly breathing
- yellowing of the skin or eyes, dark coloured urine, itching, generally feeling unwell
- irregular heartbeat.

The above list includes very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some patients.

After taking it

Storage

Keep your medicine where children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Keep your tablets in the blister pack until it is time to take them.

If you take tablets out of the blister pack, they may not keep well.

Keep your tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Do not store BICARD or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink.

Do not leave it in the car or on windowsills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking BICARD, or your tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any that are left over.

Product description

What it looks like

BICARD comes in three strengths of tablets:

- 2.5 mg tablet – white, oblong, uncoated tablet with a break-line, ‘BI’ and ‘2.5’ debossed on either side of the break-line on one side and a break-line on the reverse. AUST R 164257.
- 5 mg tablet – pale yellow mottled, round, normal convex tablet debossed with ‘BI’ breakline ‘5’ on one side and plain on the reverse. AUST R 164258.
- 10 mg tablet – mottled beige, round normal convex tablet debossed with ‘BI’ break line ‘10’ on one side and plain on the reverse. AUST R 164260.

Ingredients

The active ingredient in BICARD is bisoprolol fumarate:

- each BICARD 2.5 tablet contains 2.5 mg of bisoprolol fumarate
- each BICARD 5 tablet contains 5 mg of bisoprolol fumarate
- each BICARD 10 tablet contains 10 mg of bisoprolol

The tablets also contain:

- lactose monohydrate
- microcrystalline cellulose
- magnesium stearate
- crospovidone
- yellow PB 22812 (5mg only)
- beige PB 27215 (10mg only)

The tablets do not contain gluten, sucrose, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

Supplier

Arrotex Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd
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Australia

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