



## Medications at Home: Budesonide (Pulmicort)

The neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) team celebrates with you as your baby goes home! After graduation from the NICU, your baby will need medication to stay well.

### Why does my baby need this medication?

- Budesonide is used to prevent or control wheezing and shortness of breath caused by lung disease.
- This medication is a corticosteroid used to prevent or treat inflammation (swelling) in the airways.
- Budesonide does *not* give fast relief of wheezing and shortness of breath.

### How, how much, and when is this medication given to my baby?

- This medicine is given with a special machine called a *nebulizer* that turns liquid medication into a mist. Your baby will breathe in the mist from a face mask. Be careful not to get the mist in your baby's eyes. Nebulizer treatments take about 10–20 minutes to complete. Rinse mouth following treatment to avoid infection. The NICU team will teach you how to use the nebulizer.
- Some babies may use an inhaler. Always follow the directions given to you by your baby's team about how to administer the medication, including the use of a spacer if it is provided.
- The amount of medicine to give has been carefully calculated based on your baby's weight and needed response from the medicine. Do not change the dosage without talking to your baby's provider.
- Dose Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

### What are possible side effects?

- Dry mouth or sore throat
- Cough or runny nose
- Dizziness
- Problems sleeping
- Neck or stomach pain

### Call your baby's provider right away if your baby has

- white spots or sores in the mouth
- chest pain
- swollen face, tongue, lips, lower legs, or ankles
- common cold or eye, ear, or other infection
- headache, weakness, or fatigue
- increased difficulty with breathing
- skin rash
- bleeding or bruising
- fever
- vomiting or diarrhea
- pain with urination.

### What if my baby misses a dose?

- Give the missed dose as soon as you remember it. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and stick to the regular medication schedule.
- Never give a double dose.
- Call your baby's provider if your baby misses two or more doses.

### Important Medication Safety Tips

- Only give your baby medicines prescribed by your baby's provider. Do not share prescription medications with other children or adults.



- Check with your baby's provider before giving your baby any over-the-counter medicines.
- Keep all medicines out of reach of children, closed tightly in the bottles or containers they came in, and with the labels of directions given by the pharmacy.
- Give budesonide exactly as directed by your baby's provider.
  - Never stop giving the budesonide or give more or less than prescribed without first talking with your baby's provider. Too little may not be enough to help, and too much may cause harm. In the case of an overdose, immediately call the Poison Control Center at 800.222.1222. If you cannot wake your baby or he or she has stopped breathing, start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and call your local emergency medical services or 911 right away.
  - If your baby is taking more than one inhaled medication, do not mix them together for the nebulizer unless specifically instructed to do so by your baby's provider.
  - Store budesonide at room temperature and away from excess heat and damp areas like the bathroom.
  - If you are using the nebulizer solution, you must dispose of unused ampules 2 weeks after opening the foil pouch.
- Clean your baby's mouth with a soft cloth moistened with water after treatment is finished.
- Always use the five *rights* when giving medication to your baby:
  - Right baby (if other children are in the home)
  - Right medication
  - Right amount (always measure the dose with the syringe or dropper provided by the pharmacy, not a common household teaspoon)
  - Right time
  - Right way (exactly as prescribed and directed by your baby's provider).

*The above information is to help you better understand your baby's care. Always follow the instructions given by your baby's provider and pharmacist. It's always OK to ask questions if you have concerns about your baby. Clean your nebulizer regularly. Follow the manufacturer's directions carefully and ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about cleaning your nebulizer.*

## Online Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

HealthFinder.gov  
[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

Institute for Safe Medication Practices  
[www.consumermedsafety.org](http://www.consumermedsafety.org)

Kids Health  
[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

Medline Plus: Drug Information  
[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds)

U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)