

ConsumerRx[®]

After a heart attack - beta-blockers can help

What is a heart attack?

A heart attack (or myocardial infarction) occurs when there is a sudden interruption of blood to the heart. This lack of blood can wound the heart and create scar tissue. The heart will try to heal itself, but scar tissue does not pump as well as healthy heart muscle tissue.

How can future heart attacks be prevented?

The goal after a heart attack is to keep your heart healthy and reduce the risk of having another heart attack. The best way to do this is to talk to your doctor about your medication options, control your weight and high blood pressure, exercise regularly and reduce risks such as smoking and drinking alcohol.

What are beta-blockers?

Beta-blockers are medications that have many positive effects on the heart and circulatory system. Beta-blockers relax blood vessels, lower blood pressure and help the heart beat more regularly. Over time, all these benefits help the heart function better and improve your hearts ability to pump.

How can beta-blockers help heart attack survivors?

Clinical trials have shown that using beta-blockers after a heart attack can decrease the chance of having another heart attack (reinfarction) by up to 28%. The American College of Cardiology recommends all heart attack patients use beta-blockers for their lifetime, unless there is reason not to.

What are my beta-blocker medication options?

You have the following choices, which vary in cost but have similar clinical benefits.

Your options include:

Generic Medications: ~\$5 - 28*

acebutolol (Sectral[®]), **atenolol** (Tenormin[®]),
bisoprolol (Zebeta[®]), **carvedilol** (Coreg[®]),
labetalol (Normodyne[®]), **metoprolol**
(Lopressor[®]), **metoprolol ER** (Toprol XL[®]),
nadolol (Corgard[®]), **propranolol** (Inderal[®]),
timolol (Blocadren[®])

Brand Medications: ~\$34-\$113*

Bystolic[®]
Coreg CR[™]
Inderal LA[®]
InnoPran XL[®]

*Approximate cost estimates based on a 30-day supply. Actual prices may vary depending on your pharmacy and the amount or strength of medication dispensed. Brand names in () are non-formulary and are listed for your reference only.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you have had a heart attack, talk to your doctor to see if a beta-blocker would be right for you. Beta-blocker treatment works well, yet only one-third to one-half of heart attack survivors receive it.

Note: Since many medication options are available, our physicians and pharmacists developed this to provide you with information about the available alternatives, as well as potential advantages and lack of advantages of the various products. This medication summary was developed based upon an evaluation of information from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), scientific studies, and input from practicing doctors and specialists.

