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2. Benzonatate

Benzonatate

Generic name: benzonatate [*ben-ZOE-na-tate*]

Brand names: [Tessalon Perles](#), [Tessalon](#), [Zonatuss](#)

Drug class: [Antitussives](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Aug 14, 2023.

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What is benzonatate?

[Benzonatate](#) is a non-narcotic cough medicine.

Benzonatate works by numbing the throat and lungs, making the cough reflex less active.

Benzonatate is used to relieve [coughing](#).

Warnings

You should not use this medication if you are allergic to benzonatate or topical numbing medicines such as [tetracaine](#) or procaine (found in some insect bite and sunburn creams).

Never suck or chew on a benzonatate capsule. Swallow the pill whole. Sucking or chewing the capsule may cause your mouth and throat to feel numb or cause other serious side effects.

Serious side effects of benzonatate include choking feeling, chest pain or numbness, feeling like you might pass out, confusion, or hallucinations. Some of these side effects may result from chewing or sucking on a capsule.

Do not give this medication to a child younger than 10 years old without medical advice. **An overdose of benzonatate can be fatal to a child.**

Before taking this medicine

You should not use this medicine if you are allergic to benzonatate or topical numbing medicines such as [tetracaine](#) or procaine (found in some insect bite and sunburn creams).

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Benzonatate is not approved for use by anyone younger than 10 years old. **An overdose can be fatal, especially to a young child who has accidentally swallowed the medicine.**

 [Benzonatate pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How should I take benzonatate?

Take benzonatate exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets.

Always ask a doctor before giving a cough medicine to a child. Death can occur from the misuse of cough and cold medicines in very young children.

Take each dose with a full glass of water.

Never suck or chew on a benzonatate capsule. Swallow the pill whole. Sucking or chewing the capsule may cause serious side effects.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

 [Benzonatate patient tips](#) (more detail)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Skip the missed dose and use your next dose at the regular time. Do not use two doses at one time.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of benzonatate can be fatal, especially to a child.** Accidental death has occurred in children under 10 years old.

Overdose symptoms may include tremors, feeling restless, seizure (convulsions), [slow heart rate](#), weak pulse, fainting, and slow breathing (breathing may stop).

What to avoid

Avoid eating or drinking anything while you feel numbness or tingling in your mouth or throat.

Benzonatate side effects

Stop taking benzonatate and get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction**: [hives](#); difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- severe drowsiness or [dizziness](#);
- confusion, hallucinations.
- ongoing numbness or tingling in your mouth, throat, or face;
- numbness in your chest;
- a choking feeling;

- chills; or
- burning in your eyes.

Some of these side effects may result from chewing or sucking on a benzonatate capsule.

Common benzonatate side effects may include:

- [headache](#), dizziness;
- [nausea](#), [upset stomach](#);
- [constipation](#);
- itching, rash; or
- stuffy nose.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Benzonatate side effects](#) (more detail)

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Dosing information

Usual Adult Dose for Cough:

100 mg to 200 mg orally three times a day as needed for cough

Comments: This drug should be swallowed whole.

Use: Symptomatic relief of cough

Usual Pediatric Dose for Cough:

Children older than 10 years:

100 mg to 200 mg orally three times a day as needed for cough

Comments: This drug should be swallowed whole.

Use: Symptomatic relief of cough

 [Detailed Benzonatate dosage information](#)

What other drugs will affect benzonatate?

Using benzonatate with other drugs that make you drowsy can worsen this effect. Ask your doctor before using opioid medication, a sleeping pill, a muscle relaxer, or medicine for [anxiety](#) or [seizures](#).

Other drugs may interact with benzonatate, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

 [Benzonatate drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does benzonatate interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

+

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Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use benzonatate only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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DRUG STATUS

Availability	
Rx	Prescription only
Pregnancy & Lactation	
	Risk data available
CSA Schedule*	
N/A	Not a controlled drug
Approval History	
	Drug history at FDA

User Reviews & Ratings

4.1 / 10

[785 Reviews](#)

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