

VI. MEDICATIONS

There are two major categories of asthmatic medications that may help you breathe better: Bronchodilators and Steroids. Your doctor will decide which medications to use, when and how to use them.

BRONCHODILATORS

What they do: Open your airways and allow you to breathe better. Some are for fast relief, others are for long-term control.

Available forms: pills, liquids, inhalers, injections.

Examples of commonly prescribed medicines: Albuterol, Serevent, Alupent, Combivent, Proventil, Brethine, Ventolin, Volmax, Atrovent, Maxair, Foradil.

Possible side effects: Increased heart rate, nervousness, shakiness, headaches, nausea or upset stomach, loss of appetite, dizziness.

Things to remember: Know the names of your medications, keep a list.

1) Take the medications exactly as directed. 2) Do not increase the amount without checking with your doctor.

STEROIDS (Anti-inflammatories)

What they do: Reduces swelling and inflammation in the airways. Helps decrease mucous and wheezing and eases breathing for long term control.

Available forms: Pills, inhalers, injections.

Examples of commonly prescribed medicines: Vanceril, Beclovent, Azmacort, QVAR, Aerobid, Aerobid-M, Flovent, Pulmicort.

Possible side effects: Mouth sores, sore throat, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, weight loss, decrease appetite, weakness, dizziness.

Things to remember: Know the names of your medications, keep a list.

1) Do not stop taking or change the amount on your own. 2) After using inhalers, rinse mouth with water to avoid irritation or infections. 3) Consult your doctor if any side effects occurs



THEOPHYLLINES

What they do: For long-term control

Available forms: Pills, injections.

Examples of commonly prescribed medicines: Theodur, Unidur, Uniphyll, Theochron, Theo-24, Slobid

Possible side effects: Nausea, vomiting, tremors, heart palpitation

NONSTEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES

What they do: For long-term control. Generally not as reliable as steroids.

Available forms: Inhalers

Examples of commonly prescribed medicines: Tilade, Intal

Possible side effects: Bad taste, cough, throat irritation, wheezing, stomach upset.

LEUKOTRIENE ANTAGONISTS

What they do: Reduce swelling, inflammation, and mucus in airways. For long-term control.

Available forms: Pills

Examples of commonly prescribed medicines: Accolate, Singulair

Possible side effects: Headache, fatigue, GI upset

