

Patient Information -> Cardiac Medications

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Disclaimer: The following information is intended for cardiology patients seen by the Pediatric Cardiology Medical Group - East Bay. If you are not one of our patients, consult your cardiologist regarding cardiac medications before making any dosing or scheduling changes. If you are one of our patients, contact us before making any medication dosing or scheduling changes.

Always keep cardiac medications in a place where children will not be able to reach them.

Dosage schedules:

- Try to establish a schedule and give medications at the same time every day so that it becomes part of your routine.
- Many cardiac medications make people urinate more frequently than normal. If these medicines are to be taken once a day, it is best to give them early in the day so that your child does not need to get up in the middle of the night to urinate. If they are to be taken more than once a day, avoid giving them too close to bedtime.

Giving medications:

- You may be given an oral syringe to give liquid medication directly into the mouth. For an infant, place the syringe about halfway back in the mouth. Allow time for swallowing after each few drops.
- If the medicine is given in liquid form, read the directions on the label and measure very carefully with an oral syringe. Be sure to shake the bottle well before measuring and give exactly the dose that is ordered.
- Do not mix medicine with food or liquids since it may be difficult to tell exactly how much the child has taken.
- Keep all medications out of reach of siblings and other children.

Missed doses:

- **If you forget a dose, give it when you remember and then go back to the regular schedule but do not give doses less than 4 hours apart.** If your child vomits the medicine, forget that dose and simply resume the medicine at the next regularly scheduled time.
- **IF 2 OR MORE DOSES ARE MISSED**, call your cardiologist for instructions.

Other important details:

- Take note of the expiration date on the bottle of liquid medicine and whether it requires refrigeration or not.
- You should call the doctor if you note any of the following: unusual tiredness, weakness, sunken eyes, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Information about specific medications:

- **Digoxin** is a medicine given to make the heart beat more efficiently. It is also frequently used to treat rhythm problems. Your child will usually take this medicine twice a day for several months or possibly several years. It is not a medicine that will be addictive even if taken for years. Digoxin comes in pill form or in a liquid preparation.
- **Captopril** is a medication given to improve heart function or to control high blood pressure. It dilates (enlarges) the vessels leaving the heart and therefore makes it easier for the heart to pump blood to the body. Captopril comes in a pill form and a liquid preparation.
- **Enalapril** is a medication (similar to Captopril) given to improve heart function or to control high blood pressure. It dilates (enlarges) blood vessels leaving the heart and therefore makes it easier

for the heart to pump blood to the body. This medication is usually given twice a day (Captopril is given 3-4 times/day).

- **Propranolol (Inderal)** acts to control a fast heartbeat. Propranolol comes in two different concentrations. Make sure your pharmacist knows the proper concentration when filling your prescription. **If you ever forget a dose of propranolol, give the dose when you remember it and restart your schedule but do not give the propranolol more frequently than every five hours.**
- **Diuretics (Lasix, aldactone)** stimulate the kidney to remove excess water from the body as urine. They are used because extra fluid that some patients with cardiac disease have in their system causes the heart to work harder.



Disclaimer: The information provided here is intended to educate the reader about certain medical conditions and certain possible treatment. It is not a substitute for examination, diagnosis, and medical care provided by a licensed and qualified health professional. If you believe you, your child, or someone you know, suffer from the conditions described herein, please see your health care provider immediately. Do not attempt to treat yourself, your child or anyone else without proper medical supervision.

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