

Anti-arrhythmic agents

Sotalol (Sotacor[®])

Pharmacy Services

This is intended as a general reference.

It does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.



What is sotalol used for?

Sotalol (say *sot-ah-lol*) is used to treat certain types of irregular heart rhythms.

In atrial fibrillation, this medication is known as a “rhythm control” agent. It helps the heart to beat at a regular pace when irregular beats are present.

Why should I take this medication?

The heart muscle can weaken and the heart does not pump as well when contractions are fast, irregular, and uncoordinated.

When the heart beats too quickly, some blood gets trapped in the heart chambers. This blood can clot. Blood clots can lead to a heart attack, stroke, or the heart stopping (cardiac arrest).

Sotalol helps the heart pump well and at a regular pace which should improve your symptoms.

How does sotalol work?

Your heart is controlled by an electrical system. It triggers the heart to beat at a regular pace. When the heart’s electrical systems is disrupted for any reason, heart beats become irregular and the heart does not pump as well. We call these arrhythmias (say *ah-rith-mee-uhz*).

Sotalol works in 2 ways.

1. It blocks the effects of the hormone epinephrine (adrenaline). This causes the heart to beat more slowly and allows the blood vessels to relax and open wider.
2. It controls the disorganized electrical impulses,

allowing the heart to beat regularly.

What should I expect?

While taking sotalol, your heart rate will be slower and the effects of the irregular heart beat should improve.

Even when you feel well, keep taking sotalol until your doctor tells you something different.

How do I take sotalol?

- Take your sotalol exactly as prescribed.
- It is best to take this medication on an empty stomach. Food might reduce how well sotalol works.
- It is best to take this medication at the same time each day so you don't miss a dose.
- If you do miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you remember the next day or close to the time of your next dose, just take your next scheduled dose.
Do not double the dose to make up for the missed dose.
- Do not stop taking this medication or adjust your dose, without first talking to your pharmacist or doctor.

Can I take it with other medications?

It is important to make sure all the medications you are taking work well together.

Check with your pharmacist or doctor before starting any new medications, including medicines you buy without a prescription, herbal medicines, and alternative and natural products.

What should I watch for?

You might have some unwanted side effects. The most common side effects are:

- dizziness
- blurred vision
- feeling tired and lacking energy
- fast or irregular heart beat, palpitations
- reduced sex drive or cannot get erection

To reduce these effects, try the following activities:

- Change positions slowly when getting up from sitting or lying positions.
- Be careful with driving. Have someone else drive if your vision is affected.

Contact your pharmacist or doctor if any side effects bother you or get worse.

Contact your doctor right away if your heart is beating continually stays less than 50 beats a minute.

Other helpful points

Some medications should not be taken during pregnancy. Tell your doctor if you are or plan to become pregnant.