

Ventolin HFA® Fact Sheet
(albuterol sulfate Inhalation Aerosol)

What is Ventolin HFA?

Ventolin HFA is GlaxoSmithKline's brand of albuterol, a rescue inhaler used to treat sudden symptoms of asthma such as coughing, wheezing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. The medication is an inhaled short-acting beta-agonist – a type of bronchodilator – which quickly relieves and helps prevent airway constriction, or the tightening of the muscles surrounding the airways, thereby allowing better airflow.

Ventolin HFA is indicated for the treatment or relief of airway constriction in adults and children 4 years of age and older with asthma and for the prevention of exercise-induced airway constriction in patients 4 years of age and older.

Ventolin has been a crucial element of respiratory care for almost a half-century. The drug was first approved in Europe in 1969, and in 1981 in the U.S. In 2002, GSK introduced *Ventolin HFA*, a version that is environmentally-friendly because it eliminated the use of ozone-layer-harming chlorofluorocarbons in the product. In 2006, GSK incorporated a dose-counter on the *Ventolin HFA* inhaler that allows patients and caregivers to view how many doses of medication remain in the inhaler. Because *Ventolin HFA* is used as-needed, a dose-counter may be the most reliable way of warning patients when they require a refill.

What are Short-acting Beta-agonists (SABAs)?

Short-acting beta-agonists (SABAs) – the class of medications that includes *Ventolin* – are bronchodilators that provide fast, temporary relief from asthma symptoms or flare-ups. SABAs work quickly to relax muscles surrounding the airways. SABAs are not designed for long-term control of asthma symptoms.

Though effective in immediately relieving symptoms of an asthma attack, SABAs do not alter the underlying disease. Guidelines issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) note that the use of SABAs more than 2 days a week often indicates uncontrolled asthma and may be a sign that routine medications may need adjustment.

What are the Signs of Poor Asthma Control?

According to the NIH Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma, signs of poor asthma control include:

- waking at night with asthma symptoms
- emergency room visits, hospitalizations or other urgent care for asthma
- need for quick-relief medication such as Ventolin HFA more than two days a week
- missing school or work because of asthma
- being unable to maintain normal activity levels

Asthma control can be measured in a number of ways, including the use of the Asthma Control Test™, a simple five-question validated assessment tool recommended by the NIH guidelines. Patients should visit their healthcare provider to determine if their asthma is well controlled.

Important Information about Ventolin HFA:

Ventolin HFA is indicated for the prevention and relief of bronchospasm in patients 4 years of age and older with reversible obstructive airway disease.

If your symptoms become significantly worse when you use *Ventolin HFA*, call your doctor immediately as this reaction can be life threatening. This worsening of symptoms frequently occurs with the first use of a new canister. Tell your doctor if you have a heart, blood, or seizure disorder, high blood pressure, diabetes, or an overactive thyroid. Some medicines can interfere with how well asthma medications work. Tell your doctor about all medicines you are taking, especially heart medicines and drugs that treat depression. In clinical studies, the most common side effects (incidence greater than or equal to 3%) were throat irritation, viral respiratory infection, upper respiratory inflammation, cough, and musculoskeletal pain. The side effect profile in children was generally similar to that of adults.

See full Prescribing Information at www.ventolin.com.