

***About your medication***

**FLECAINIDE**

(TAMBOCOR® , FLECATAB®)

*Other brands may be available*

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## **WHAT IS FLECAINIDE?**

Flecainide is an antiarrhythmic agent. It is only available with a doctor's prescription.

## **WHAT IS IT FOR?**

Flecainide is mainly used for its effects on rate or rhythm (arrhythmia) of the heartbeat. In particular, it acts on special parts of the heart that pass on the electrical signal which maintains heart rhythm.

Flecainide has been used for many years in children. This experience provides doctors with the knowledge and confidence that it has benefits in the treatment of arrhythmias in children.

There may be other reasons this medicine is being prescribed. Please ask if you do not know why Flecainide is being used.

## **HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICINE**

It is important that this medicine is given only as directed and not given to other people.

- Your child's doctor may start your child on a low dose of flecainide and gradually increase the dose. It is very important to follow the doctor's instructions. Never change the dose yourself.
- Flecainide is normally given once to twice daily.
- Flecainide absorption may be reduced if it is taken at the same time as milk. Therefore, you should give flecainide doses at least one hour before or two hours after giving milk or milk feeds.
- It is best to give your child's medicine at about the same time each day regardless of whether they are having a single daily dose or multiple doses per day.
- Blood tests may be required to monitor the level of flecainide.
- Do not give partial doses unless provided by the pharmacy.
- If your child's medicine has been provided to you as individually wrapped powders, reconstitute the full contents of the sachet with the specified amount of water. Shake the solution very well and use an oral syringe to draw up all of the solution. Ensure that there is no medication left.

## **WHAT TO DO IF A DOSE IS MISSED**

If you miss a dose of the medication it can be given as soon as you remember. Do not give the missed dose if it is close to the next one; just give the next dose as normal. Do not double up on any doses.

## **STORING THE MEDICINE**

It is important to keep flecainide locked away out of the reach of children. Do not keep the flecainide in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make it less effective. Store in a cool, dry place, away from heat and direct light.

## **USE OF OTHER MEDICINES**

Care must be taken when using flecainide with some other medications. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any prescription medicine or medicine

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purchased without prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket, or health food shop. This is especially important with:

- Other medications that may slow heart rate (e.g. beta blocker medicines)
- Other medicines used for heart arrhythmias or other heart conditions e.g. digoxin, amiodarone, unless specified by your child's doctor
- Some medicines used for the treatment of stomach and duodenal ulcers e.g. cimetidine
- Some medicines used for seizures such as phenytoin, phenobarbitone, and carbamazepine

This list is not complete. Talk to your child's doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions with any over-the-counter or complementary medicines or recreational substances (e.g. alcohol).

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Do not suddenly stop giving this medicine without first checking with your child's doctor. Stopping flecainide suddenly may worsen your child's condition.
- This medication may make your child dizzy. Care must be taken with activities such as climbing trees, riding bikes, driving boats or vehicles, operating equipment or machinery or other activities where quick judgement and alertness are required, until you know how this medication will affect your child.
- Keep all appointments with your child's paediatric cardiologist so progress can be reviewed
- Talk to your healthcare provider before taking this medicine if you have any other conditions that may mean this medicine should not be used (e.g. other heart conditions or liver disease)
- The RCH pharmacy may prepare special dosage forms (e.g. capsules) if you have a prescription written by a RCH doctor. *These may take some time to prepare, so **please notify the RCH pharmacy 2-3 working days in advance.***

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects can occur while taking flecainide. Some of these are not serious and will go away with time or after the dose has been changed. Others are more serious and require you to check with your doctor.

#### Less serious side effects include:

- blurred vision or seeing spots
- dizziness
- lightheadedness
- anxiety
- constipation
- headache
- nausea and vomiting

#### **More Serious** (Contact doctor *as soon as possible* if any of the following occur):

- chest pain
- palpitations in the chest
- shortness of breath
- tremor
- yellowing of the whites of the eyes or skin.

#### **Allergic reaction** (Stop medicine and see doctor immediately):

- Skin rash, itching or hives, swollen mouth or lips, wheezing or difficulty breathing

*IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONTACT*



***Your Child's Doctor via the RCH Switchboard on 03 9345 5522  
OR***

***Pharmacy Department on 03 9345 5492  
IN CASE OF POISONING OR OVERDOSE CONTACT  
POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE 13 11 26 (24 hour service)***

This leaflet answers some common questions about your child's medicine. It does not contain all available information. It does not take the place of talking to your child's doctor or pharmacist. The leaflet may differ from information in the manufacturer's Consumer Medicine Information. The information in this leaflet reflects the usage of medicine under medical supervision by patients of The Royal Children's Hospital. Medicine may be used in children in different ways or for different reasons than in adults - for more information see the leaflet "[Medicines for Children](#)". This leaflet includes information current at the time of review of the document – SEPTEMBER 2011.

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