



Baclofen

Treatment for Alcohol Use Disorder

How Can Baclofen Help Me Cut Down or Stop Drinking?

Baclofen can reduce your urge or craving to drink, and can help you stop drinking.

How Does Baclofen Work?

- Baclofen is an oral medication that works on chemicals in the brain. It reduces the “good” feeling that makes you want to use alcohol.
- This medicine is not a cure for an alcohol use disorder, but it can increase your ability to remain sober.

Will I Need Other Forms of Treatment for My Drinking Problem?

A successful alcohol treatment program will include a combination of prescription medication and recovery support programs. Effective therapies include participation in Alcoholics Anonymous, counseling, individual or group therapy, and/or hospital treatment.

What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Baclofen?

- Baclofen should only be used after other alcohol use disorder pharmacotherapy options have been considered.
- After stopping Baclofen there can be potentially serious withdrawal symptoms including hallucinations and seizures.
- It is uncertain whether potential benefits of Baclofen outweigh its harms.
- Baclofen is also commonly used to treat muscle spasms.
- Baclofen can affect blood sugar levels. If you have diabetes, talk with your provider before you take the medicine.
- Tell your provider if you have any of these conditions:
 - Kidney disease, seizures or stroke
 - Unusual or allergic reaction to baclofen, other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives
 - Pregnant, planning on getting pregnant, or breastfeeding

How Should I Take Baclofen?

- The most common dose of baclofen for the treatment of alcohol use disorder is 10 milligrams (mg) three times daily.
- Take this medicine by mouth. Do not take more medicine than you are prescribed.
- Do not suddenly stop taking your medicine. If you do, you may develop a severe reaction. If your provider wants you to stop the medicine, the dose will be slowly lowered over time to avoid any side effects. Follow the advice of your provider.

What Are Some of the Side Effects of Baclofen?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side effects although not everyone experiences them. These usually improve with time as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side effects continue or become troublesome.

You may get drowsy or dizzy when you first start taking the medicine or change doses. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that may be dangerous until you know how the medicine affects you. Stand or sit up slowly.

| Common Side Effects | What Can I Do if I Experience This? |
|---------------------|---|
| Confusion | Contact your provider if you feel there are notably worsening signs or symptoms |
| Headache | Non-opioid pain reliever as recommended by your provider |
| Nausea | Avoid high-fat, fried, or spicy foods Eat plain rice, toast, or crackers |
| Dizziness | Rise slowly to prevent falls |

Less Common, But Can Be Severe:

Tell your doctor immediately if you have any of the following:

- Allergic reactions like skin rash, itching, hives, swelling of the face, lips or tongue
- Chest pain
- Hallucinations
- Seizure

How Long Do I Have to Take Baclofen?

- You and your provider will decide on your treatment plan. Most people usually take baclofen for 6–12 months.
- Do not stop your medication without talking to your healthcare provider first.

