

BACLOFEN (FOR SPASTICITY)

DRUG NAME

Generic: Baclofen

Class of drug: Muscle relaxant

Brands in Australia: Clofen, Lioresal, Stelax (other generic brands available)

DOSAGE FORM

Available as a 10 mg tablet or 25 mg tablet. Quantity 100.

Also available as an injection.

HOW IT WORKS

Baclofen is a **muscle relaxant**. It mimics GABA, a natural calming chemical in the nervous system. This reduces excessive nerve signals in the spinal cord that cause **muscle stiffness and spasms**.

Used to relieve **muscle spasticity** due to conditions like multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, or cerebral palsy. In pain settings, reducing spasm can also **improve function and comfort**.

Onset of action

- Some relief may occur within a few days.
- Maximum effect usually seen within 1–2 weeks of reaching the right dose.

DOSAGE & FREQUENCY

Your doctor will advise on the starting dose and guide the dose changes. Often titrated slowly to minimise side effects.

Oral tablets

- start with _____
- if tolerated, increase to _____ after _____ days
- if necessary, increase by _____ every _____ week(s)
- if successive increases are well tolerated *and bring additional benefit*, continue to titrate up to a maximum of _____
- to be reviewed by your doctor on _____

Intrathecal pump (direct into spinal fluid)

- Used in severe cases under specialist care.

ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION

Oral (by mouth) or intrathecal.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW WHILE TAKING THIS MEDICATION

- Take tablets with food to minimise stomach upset (oral tablets).

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- Baclofen may cause drowsiness, dizziness or affect your vision; if you are affected, do not drive or use machinery.
- Avoid drinking alcohol as it may worsen some of the side effects of baclofen.
- Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly unless your doctor tells you to – withdrawal can cause hallucinations, seizures, or rebound spasticity.
- If using a baclofen pump, follow specialist instructions for care and refilling.

STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS

Refer to the manufacturer's or specialist's instructions.

DISPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Return unused or expired medication to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

MISSED DOSE INSTRUCTIONS

Ask your doctor or pharmacist.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS

Seek urgent medical help if you:

- Take too much (overdose may cause extreme drowsiness, weak muscles, slow breathing, seizures, unconsciousness).
- Suddenly stop long-term treatment (can cause hallucinations, seizures, confusion).
- Develop severe allergic reaction (rash, swelling, breathing problems).

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

- Drowsiness, dizziness
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Constipation

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS

- Hallucinations, confusion
- Seizures
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe muscle weakness
- Allergic reaction

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR SIDE EFFECTS

- Drowsiness: Take at night until body adjusts. Avoid driving until you know your response.
- Weakness: Dose adjustments may help; discuss with your doctor.
- Constipation: Increase fluids, fibre, and gentle exercise.
- Nausea: Take with food (oral tablets).

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Interactions:

- Alcohol, sedatives, and opioids increase risk of drowsiness and breathing problems.
- May interact with some antidepressants and seizure medicines.

Precautions:

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- Use with caution in kidney disease (dose adjustment required).
- Not usually recommended in pregnancy unless necessary.
- Do not stop suddenly — taper under medical guidance.

Elective surgery advice

- Usually continued before surgery.
- Inform your surgeon and anaesthetist — baclofen may increase sedation when combined with anaesthetics.
- If you use an intrathecal pump, your surgical team must be informed for special management.

TITRATION DIARY

Date	Dose Taken	Side Effects	Notes (e.g., sleep, pain relief)