

**Baclofen** (also called Gablofen or Lioresal) is a *skeletal muscle relaxant* often used to treat increased muscle tone (**hypertonia**) and spasticity as symptoms of cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, motor neuron disease, or spinal cord damage. It can be given by mouth or through a surgically implanted pump that delivers the medicine intrathecally (directly into the spinal column).

Baclofen does not cure these problems but can help reduce the symptoms and severity of the condition. It relaxes stiff and tight muscles; can help improve flexibility; and decreases cramping and discomfort caused by tight muscles.

### Common side effects:

- Sleepiness
- Constipation
- Nausea
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Change in urination (urinating more often, losing bladder control, or difficulty urinating)

In some children with epilepsy, baclofen can increase the number of seizures. Call your child's physician if these side effects are persistent or disruptive.

### Signs of an allergic reaction:

- A rash that is itchy, red, and swollen; may be blistered and peeling
- Tightness in the chest or throat
- Trouble breathing or talking
- Unusual hoarseness
- Swollen mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat

Call your child's physician immediately if you suspect a rash from the medicine.

### Severe side effects:

- Extreme weakness
- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Bloody or dark urine
- Repeated vomiting

**Call 911 or take your child to the emergency room *immediately* if they are having any difficulty breathing or if you suspect a severe side effect.**

### Precautions:

- This medication is started slowly to avoid side effects. It is important for your child to take it regularly.

- If it is stopped too quickly, withdrawal symptoms may occur.
- Please contact your child's provider right away if withdrawal symptoms occur, including:
  - A return of increased muscle tone and spasticity
  - Fever
  - Itchiness
  - Irritability

**Drug interactions:** Use baclofen with caution with other medications and substances that suppress the central nervous system, including alcohol, prescription pain medications, or other muscle relaxants and sedatives. Ask your child's physician if you have any questions about potential medication interactions.

Please be aware that all medications may cause side effects. Many people have no side effects or only minor side effects. Notify your child's provider if any of these side effects bother your child or do not go away.

**If severe side effects occur or you suspect symptoms of an allergic reaction, call your child's provider right away or seek emergency medical attention.**

Please speak with your child's pharmacist for complete drug information.

#### Resources and References:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a682530.html>

<https://www.cerebralpalsy.org/about-cerebral-palsy/treatment/medication>

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/spasticity>