Package Leaflet: Information for the user

Benetor Plus 40 mg/12.5 mg
Benetor Plus 40 mg/25 mg
Film-coated tablets
olmesartan medoxomil/hydrochlorothiazide

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.
- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet

1. What Benetor Plus is and what it is used for

Benetor Plus contains two active substances, olmesartan medoxomil and hydrochlorothiazide, that are used to treat high blood pressure (hypertension):

- Olmesartan medoxomil is one of a group of medicines called angiotensin II-receptor antagonists. It lowers blood pressure by relaxing the blood vessels.

- Hydrochlorothiazide is one of a group of medicines called thiazide diuretics ("water tablets"). It lowers blood pressure by helping the body to get rid of extra fluid by making your kidneys produce more urine.

You will only be given Benetor Plus if Benetor (olmesartan medoxomil) alone has not adequately controlled your blood pressure. When given together, the two active substances in Benetor Plus help to lower blood pressure more than if either of them were given alone.

You may already be taking medicines to treat your high blood pressure, but your doctor may want you to take Benetor Plus to lower it more.

High blood pressure can be controlled with medicines such as Benetor Plus tablets. Your doctor has probably also recommended that you make some changes in your lifestyle to help lower your blood pressure (for example losing weight, giving up smoking, reducing the amount of alcohol you drink and reducing the amount of salt in your diet). Your doctor may also have urged you to take regular exercise, such as walking or swimming. It is important to follow this advice from your doctor.

2. What you need to know before you take Benetor Plus

Do not take Benetor Plus:

- if you are allergic to olmesartan medoxomil or hydrochlorothiazide, or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6) or substances similar to hydrochlorothiazide (sulfonamides)
- if you are more than 3 months pregnant (It is also better to avoid Benetor Plus in early pregnancy – see pregnancy section)
- if you have kidney problems
- if you have diabetes or impaired kidney function and you are treated with a blood pressure lowering medicine containing aliskiren
- if you suffer from low potassium, low sodium, high calcium or high uric acid levels in the blood (with symptoms of gout or kidney stones) that do not get better when treated
- if you suffer from moderate or severe liver problems or yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice) or problems with drainage of the bile from the gallbladder (biliary obstruction e.g. gallstones)

If you think any of these apply to you, or you are unsure, do not take the tablets. Talk to your doctor first and follow the advice given.

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor before using Benetor Plus.

Before you take the tablets, **tell your doctor** if you are taking any of the following medicines used to treat high blood pressure:
- an ACE-inhibitor (for example enalapril, lisinopril, ramipril), in particular if you have diabetes-related kidney problems.
- aliskiren

Your doctor may check your kidney function, blood pressure, and the amount of electrolytes (e.g. potassium) in your blood at regular intervals.

See also information under the heading "Do not take Benetor Plus".

Before you take the tablets, **tell your doctor** if you have any of the following health problems:

- Kidney transplant
- Liver diseases
- Heart failure or problems with your heart valves or heart muscles
- Vomiting (being sick) or diarrhoea which is severe or it goes on for several days
- Treatment with high doses of water tablets (diuretics) or if you are on a low salt diet
- Problems with your adrenal glands (e.g. primary aldosteronism)
- Diabetes
- Lupus erythematosus (an autoimmune disease)
- Allergies or asthma
- If you have had skin cancer or if you develop an unexpected skin lesion during the treatment. Treatment with hydrochlorothiazide, particularly long term use with high doses, may increase the risk of some types of skin and lip cancer (non-melanoma skin cancer). Protect your skin from sun exposure and UV rays while taking Benetor Plus.

- If you experienced breathing or lung problems (including inflammation or fluid in the lungs) following hydrochlorothiazide intake in the past. If you develop any severe shortness of breath or difficulty breathing after taking Benetor Plus, seek medical attention immediately.

Contact your doctor if you experience any of the following symptoms:
- diarrhoea that is severe, persistent and causes substantial weight loss. Your doctor may evaluate your symptoms and decide on how to continue your blood pressure medication.
- decrease in vision or eye pain. These could be symptoms of fluid accumulation in the vascular layer of the eye (choroidal effusion) or an increase of pressure in your eye and can happen within hours to weeks of taking Benetor Plus. This can lead to permanent vision impairment, if not treated.

Your doctor may want to see you more often and do some tests if you have any of these conditions.

Benetor Plus may cause a rise in blood fat levels and uric acid levels (the cause of gout – painful swelling of the joints). Your doctor will probably want to do a blood test from time to time to check these.

It may change the levels of certain chemicals in your blood called electrolytes. Your doctor will probably want to do a blood test from time to time to check these. Signs of electrolyte changes are: thirst, dryness of the mouth, muscle pain or cramps, tired muscles, low blood pressure (hypotension), feeling weak, sluggish, tired, sleepy or restless, nausea, vomiting, less need to pass urine, a rapid heart rate. **Tell your doctor if you notice these symptoms.**

As with any medicine which reduces blood pressure, an excessive drop in blood pressure in patients with blood flow disturbances of the heart or brain could lead to a heart attack or stroke. Your doctor will therefore check your blood pressure carefully.

If you are due to have tests for parathyroid function, you should stop taking Benetor Plus before these tests are carried out.

If you are a sports person, this medicine could change the results of an anti-dope test to make it positive.

You must tell your doctor if you think that you are (or might become) pregnant. Benetor Plus is not recommended in early pregnancy, and must not be taken if you are more than 3 months pregnant, as it may cause serious harm to your baby if used at that stage (see pregnancy section).

Children and adolescents

Benetor Plus is not recommended for children and adolescents under the age of 18.

Other medicines and Benetor Plus

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are using, have recently used or might use any other medicines.

In particular, tell your doctor or pharmacist about any of the following:

- Other blood pressure lowering medicines (anti-hypertensives), as the effect of Benetor Plus can be increased.

Your doctor may need to change your dose and/or to take other precautions:
If you are taking an ACE-inhibitor or aliskiren (see also information under the headings "Do not take Benetor Plus" and "Warnings and precautions").

- Medicines which may alter the levels of potassium in your blood if used at the same time as Benetor Plus. These include:
  - potassium supplements (as well as salt substitutes containing potassium)
  - water tablets (diuretics)
  - heparin (for thinning the blood)
  - laxatives
  - steroids
  - adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH)
  - carbenoxolone (a medicine used to treat mouth and stomach ulcers)
  - penicillin G sodium (also called benzylpenicillin sodium, an antibiotic)
  - certain pain killers such as aspirin or salicylates
- Lithium (a medicine used to treat mood swings and some types of depression) used at the same time as Benetor Plus may increase the toxicity of lithium. If you have to take lithium, your doctor will measure your lithium blood levels.
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAIDs) medicines (medicines used to relieve pain, swelling and other symptoms of inflammation, including arthritis) used at the same time as Benetor Plus may increase the risk of kidney failure and the effect of Benetor Plus can be decreased by NSAIDs.
- Sleeping tablets, sedatives and anti-depressant medicines, as using these medicines together with Benetor Plus may cause a sudden drop in blood pressure when standing up.
- Certain medicines such as baclofen and tubocurarine, used to relax muscles.
- Amifostine and some other drugs used to treat cancers, such as cyclophosphamide or methotrexate.
- Colestyramine and colestipol, medicines for lowering blood fat levels.
- Colesevelam hydrochloride, a drug that lowers the level of cholesterol in your blood, as the effect of Benetor Plus may be decreased. Your doctor may advise you to take Benetor Plus at least 4 hours before colesevelam hydrochloride.
- Anticholinergic agents, such as atropine and biperiden.
- Drugs such as thioridazine, chlorpromazine, levomepromazine, trifluoperazine, cyamemazine, sulpiride, amisulpride, pimozide, sultopride, tiapride, droperidol or haloperidol, used to treat certain psychiatric disorders.
- Certain medicines such as quinidine, hydroquinidine, disopyramide, amiodarone, sotalol or digitalis, used to treat heart problems.
- Medicines such as mizolastine, pentamidine, terfenadine, dofetilide, ibutilide or erythromycin injections, which may change the heart rhythm.
- Oral anti-diabetic medicines, such as metformin, or insulin, used to lower blood sugar.
- Beta-blockers and diazoxide, medicines used to treat high blood pressure or low blood sugar, respectively, as Benetor Plus can enhance their blood-sugar-increasing effect.
- Methyldopa, a medicine used to treat high blood pressure.
- Medicines such as noradrenaline, used to increase blood pressure and slow heart rate.
- Diphemanil, used to treat a slow heartbeat or reduce sweating.
- Medicines such as probenecid, sulfinpyrazone and allopurinol, used to treat gout.
- Calcium supplements.
- Amantadine, an anti-viral drug.
- Ciclosporin, a medicine used to stop rejection of organ transplants.
- Certain antibiotics called tetracyclines or sparfloxacin.
- Amphotericin, a medicine used to treat fungal infections.
- Certain antacids, used to treat too much stomach acid, such as aluminium magnesium hydroxide, as the effect of Benetor Plus can be slightly decreased.
- Cisapride, used to increase food movement in the stomach and gut.

- Halofantrine, used for malaria.

Benetor Plus with food and drink

Benetor Plus can be taken with or without food.

Take care when drinking alcohol while you are taking Benetor Plus, as some people feel faint or dizzy. If this happens to you, do not drink any alcohol, including wine, beer or alcopops.

Black patients

As with other similar drugs the blood pressure lowering effect of Benetor Plus is somewhat less in black patients.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding

Pregnancy
You must tell your doctor if you think you are (or might become) pregnant. Your doctor will normally advise you to stop taking Benetor Plus before you become pregnant or as soon as you know you are pregnant and will advise you to take another medicine instead of Benetor Plus. Benetor Plus is not recommended during pregnancy, and must not be taken when more than 3 months pregnant, as it may cause serious harm to your baby if it is used after the third month of pregnancy.

Breast-feeding
Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding or about to start breast-feeding. Benetor Plus is not recommended for mothers who are breast-feeding, and your doctor may choose another treatment for you if you wish to breast-feed.

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine.

Driving and using machines

You may feel sleepy or dizzy while being treated for your high blood pressure. If this happens, do not drive or use machines until the symptoms wear off. Ask your doctor for advice.

Benetor Plus contains lactose

This medicine contains lactose (a type of sugar). If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to some sugars, contact your doctor before taking this medicine.

3. How to take Benetor Plus

Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

The recommended dose is one Benetor Plus 40 mg/12.5 mg tablet a day. However, if your blood pressure is not controlled, your doctor may decide to change your dose to one Benetor Plus 40 mg/25 mg tablet a day.

Swallow the tablet with water. If possible, you should take your dose **at the same time each day**, for example at breakfast time. It is important to continue to take Benetor Plus until your doctor tells you to stop.

If you take more Benetor Plus than you should

If you take more tablets than you should, or if a child accidentally swallows one or more, go to your doctor or nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department immediately and take your medicine pack with you.

If you forget to take Benetor Plus

If you forget to take a dose, take your normal dose on the following day as usual. Do **not** take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

If you stop taking Benetor Plus

It is important to continue to take Benetor Plus unless your doctor tells you to stop.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

However, the following side effects can be serious:

- Allergic reactions that may affect the whole body, with swelling of the face, mouth and/or voice box (larynx) together with itching and rash may occur rarely. **If this happens, stop taking Benetor Plus and contact your doctor immediately.**

- Benetor Plus can cause the blood pressure to fall too low in susceptible individuals or as the result of an allergic reaction. Light-headedness or fainting may occur uncommonly. **If this happens, stop taking Benetor Plus, contact your doctor immediately and lie down flat.**

- Frequency not known: If you experience yellowing of the whites of the eyes, dark urine, itching of the skin, even if you started therapy with Benetor Plus longer time ago, **contact your doctor immediately** who will evaluate your symptoms and decide on how to continue your blood pressure medication.

Benetor Plus is a combination of two active substances and the following information firstly gives the other side effects reported so far with the combination Benetor Plus (besides those already mentioned above) and, secondly, those which are known about for the separate active substances.

These are the other side effects known about so far with Benetor Plus:

If these side effects occur, they are often mild and **you do not need to stop your treatment.**

Common side effects (may affect up to 1 in 10 people):
Dizziness, weakness, headache, tiredness, chest pain, swelling of ankles, feet, legs, hands or arms.

Uncommon side effects (may affect up to 1 in 100 people):
Fluttering of the heartbeat (palpitations), rash, eczema, vertigo, cough, indigestion, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, muscle cramps and muscular pain, pain in joints, arms and legs, back pain, erection difficulties in men, blood in urine.
Some changes in blood test results have also been seen uncommonly and include:
Rise in blood fat levels, rise in blood urea or uric acid, rise in creatinine, rise or decrease in blood potassium levels, rise in blood calcium levels, rise in blood sugar, increase in levels of liver function. Your doctor will know about these from a blood test and will tell you if you need to do anything.

Rare side effects (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people):
Feeling unwell, disturbances in consciousness, skin lumps (wheals), acute kidney failure.

Some changes in blood test results have also been seen in rare cases and include:
Rise in blood urea nitrogen, decrease in haemoglobin and haematocrit values. Your doctor will know about these from a blood test and will tell you if you need to do anything.

Further side effects reported with use of olmesartan medoxomil or hydrochlorothiazide alone, but not with Benetor Plus or in a higher frequency:

Olmesartan medoxomil:

Common side effects (may affect up to 1 in 10 people):
Bronchitis, cough, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, abdominal pain, indigestion, diarrhoea, nausea, gastroenteritis, pain in the joints or bones, back pain, blood in urine, urinary tract infection, flu-like symptoms, pain.

Some changes in blood test results have also been seen commonly and include:
Rise in blood fat levels, rise in blood urea or uric acid, increase in levels of liver and muscle function.

Uncommon side effects (may affect up to 1 in 100 people):
Quick allergic reactions that may affect the whole body and may cause breathing problems as well as a rapid fall of blood pressure that may even lead to fainting (anaphylactic reactions), swelling of the face, angina (pain or uncomfortable feeling in the chest; known as angina pectoris), feeling unwell, allergic skin rash, itching, exanthema (skin eruption), skin lumps (wheals).

Some changes in blood test results have also been seen uncommonly and include:
Reduced numbers of a type of blood cell, known as platelets (thrombocytopenia).

Rare side effects (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people):
Impaired kidney function, lack of energy.

Some changes in blood test results have also been seen rarely and include:
Increase in blood potassium.

Hydrochlorothiazide:

Very common side effects (may affect more than 1 in 10 people):
Changes in blood results including: Increase in blood fat and uric acid levels.

Common side effects (may affect up to 1 in 10 people):
Feeling confused, abdominal pain, stomach upset, bloated feeling, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, constipation, excretion of glucose into the urine.

Some changes in blood results have also been seen and include:
Increase in blood creatinine, urea, calcium and sugar levels, decrease in blood chloride, potassium, magnesium and sodium levels. Increase of serum amylase (hyperamylasaemia).

Uncommon side effects (may affect up to 1 in 100 people):
Decreased or loss of appetite, severe difficulty breathing, anaphylactic skin reactions (hypersensitivity reactions), worsening of pre-existing myopia erythema, skin reactions to light, itching, purplish spots or patches on the skin due to small haemorrhages (purpura), skin lumps (wheals).

Rare side effects (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people):
Swollen and sore salivary glands, decreased number of white blood cells, decreased number of blood platelets, anaemia, bone marrow damage, restlessness, feeling 'down' or depressed, problems sleeping, feeling un-interested (apathy), tingling and numbness, fits (convulsions), objects you look at appearing yellow, blurred vision, dry eyes, irregular heartbeat, inflammation of the blood vessels, blood clots (thrombosis or embolism), inflammation of the lung, fluid accumulation in the lungs, inflammation of the pancreas, jaundice, infection in the gall bladder, symptoms of lupus erythematosus (such as rash, joint pains and cold hands and fingers), allergic skin reactions, peeling and blistering of the skin, non-infectious inflammation of the kidney (interstitial nephritis), fever, muscle weakness (sometimes causing impaired movement).

Very rare side effects (may affect up to 1 in 10,000 people):
Electrolyte disturbance leading to an abnormally depleted level of chloride in the blood (hypochloraemic alkalosis), blockage in the gut (paralytic ileus).
Acute respiratory distress (signs include severe shortness of breath, fever, weakness, and confusion).

Not known (frequency cannot be estimated from the available data):
Decrease in vision or eye pain (possible signs of fluid accumulation in the vascular layer of the eye (choroidal effusion) or acute angle-closure glaucoma).
Skin and lip cancer (Non-melanoma skin cancer).

Reporting of side effects:
If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via HPRA Pharmacovigilance Website: www.hpra.ie
By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

5. How to store Benetor Plus

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

This medicinal product does not require any special storage conditions.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton and on the blister strip after EXP. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Do not throw away any medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use. These measures will help protect the environment.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What Benetor Plus contains

The active substances are:

Benetor Plus 40 mg/12.5 mg: Each film-coated tablet contains 40 mg olmesartan medoxomil and 12.5 mg hydrochlorothiazide.
Benetor Plus 40 mg/25 mg: Each film-coated tablet contains 40 mg olmesartan medoxomil and 25 mg hydrochlorothiazide.

The other ingredients are:

Microcrystalline cellulose, lactose monohydrate*, low substituted hyprolose, hyprolose, magnesium stearate, titanium dioxide (E 171), talc, hypromellose, iron (III) oxides (E 172).

* See '**Benetor Plus contains lactose**' section above

What Benetor Plus looks like and contents of the pack

Benetor Plus 40 mg/12.5 mg film-coated tablets of 15 x 7 mm are reddish-yellow, oval with "C23" on one side.
Benetor Plus 40 mg/25 mg film-coated tablets of 15 x 7 mm are pinkish, oval with "C25" on one side.

They are available in packs of 14, 28, 30, 56, 84, 90, 98, 10 x 28 and 10 x 30 film-coated tablets and in packs with perforated unit dose blisters of 10, 50 and 500 film-coated tablets.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturer

Marketing Authorisation Holder:
Daiichi Sankyo Ireland Limited
Riverside One
Sir John Rogerson's Quay
Dublin 2
Ireland

Manufacturer:
DAIICHI SANKYO EUROPE GmbH
Luitpoldstrasse 1
85276 Pfaffenhofen
Germany

This medicinal product is authorised in the Member States of the EEA under the following names:
Austria: Olmetec Plus
Belgium: Olmetec Plus
Denmark: Olmetec Plus
Germany: Olmetec Plus
Greece: Olmetec Plus
Finland: Olmetec Plus
France: CoOlmetec
Iceland: Olmetec Plus
Ireland: Benetor Plus
Italy: Olmegan
Luxembourg: Olmetec Plus
The Netherlands: Olmetec HCTZ
Norway: Olmetec Comp
Portugal: Olmetec Plus
Spain: Olmetec Plus
UK: Olmetec Plus

This leaflet was last revised in March 2022.

Other sources of information
Detailed information on this medicine is available on the web site of: IE/HPRA