

# **ABCARB / FORTE™**

Sodium Bicarbonate 500/1000 mg **Tablets**

## **Sodium Bicarbonate**

### **Why is this medication prescribed?**

**Sodium bicarbonate is an antacid used to relieve heartburn and acid indigestion. Your doctor also may prescribe sodium bicarbonate to make your blood or urine less acidic in certain conditions.**

**This medication is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.**

### **How should this medicine be used?**

**Sodium bicarbonate comes as a tablet and powder to take by mouth. Sodium bicarbonate is taken one to four times a day, depending on the reason you take it. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take sodium bicarbonate exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.**

**If you are using sodium bicarbonate as an antacid, it should be taken 1 to 2 hours after meals, with a full glass of water. If you are using sodium bicarbonate for another reason, it may be taken with or without food. Do not take sodium bicarbonate on an overly full stomach.**

**Dissolve sodium bicarbonate powder in at least 4 ounces (120 milliliters) of water. Measure powdered doses carefully using a measuring spoon.**

**Do not use sodium bicarbonate for longer than 2 weeks unless your doctor tells you to. If sodium bicarbonate does not improve your symptoms, call your doctor.**

**Do not give sodium bicarbonate to children under 12 years of age unless your doctor tells you to.**

### **What special precautions should I follow?**

**Before taking sodium bicarbonate,**

- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take while taking sodium bicarbonate. Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects..**
- Take sodium bicarbonate at least 2 hours apart from other medicines.**
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, or kidney disease or if you have recently had bleeding in your stomach or intestine.**
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking sodium bicarbonate, call your doctor.**

### **What special dietary instructions should I follow?**

**This medicine increases the amount of sodium in your body. If you are on a sodium-restricted diet, check with your doctor before taking sodium bicarbonate.**

### **What should I do if I forget a dose?**

**If your doctor has told you to take sodium bicarbonate on a certain schedule, take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.**

**What side effects can this medication cause?**

**Sodium bicarbonate may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:**

- increased thirst
- stomach cramps
- gas

**If you have any of the following symptoms, stop taking sodium bicarbonate and call your doctor immediately:**

- severe headache
- nausea
- vomit that resembles coffee grounds
- loss of appetite
- irritability
- weakness
- frequent urge to urinate
- slow breathing
- swelling of feet or lower legs
- bloody, black, or tarry stools
- blood in your urine

**If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online (**

**What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?**

**Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom).**

**Dispose of unneeded medications in a way so that pets, children, and other people cannot take them. Do not flush this medication down the toilet. Use a medicine take-back program. Talk to your pharmacist about take-back programs in your community. Visit the FDA's Safe Disposal of Medicines website <https://goo.gl/c4Rm4p> for more information.**

**Keep all medication out of sight and reach of children as many containers are not child-resistant. Always lock safety caps. Place the medication in a safe location – one that is up and away and out of their sight and reach. <https://www.upandaway.org>**

**In case of emergency/overdose**

**In case of overdose, call the poison control helpline at 1-800-222-1222. Information is also available online at <https://www.poisonhelp.org/help>. If the victim has collapsed, had a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened, immediately call emergency services at 911.**

**What other information should I know?**

**If your doctor has prescribed sodium bicarbonate, keep all scheduled appointments so that your response to the medicine can be checked.**

**Keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines, vitamins, minerals, and dietary supplements you are taking. Bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to the hospital. You should carry the list with you in case of emergencies.**