

Amlodipine/ Benazepril

Trade Name: Lotrel® (combination of Norvasc® and Lotensin®)

Prescription Type: Oral capsule

Drug Company: Pfizer and Ciba

Uses:

Amlodipine is a calcium channel blocker. Calcium is involved in muscle contraction. By blocking calcium, amlodipine relaxes the heart muscle and increases the size of the blood vessels to the heart to prevent spasms. Benazepril is an ACE inhibitor. ACE inhibitors reduce blood pressure by increasing the size of the veins and reducing the volume of blood in the body. It also increases renal blood flow. Amlodipine and Benazepril are prescribed in a combination form (Lotrel®) to treat high blood pressure (hypertension).

High blood pressure is often a result of poor kidney function. The poor kidney function causes the body to retain salt and water. The increased amount of fluid will cause the blood pressure to rise. Combinations of high blood pressure medication and diuretics (water-reducing drugs) are often prescribed.

How To Take This Medication:

Take this medication exactly as prescribed. Try to take it at the same time every day.

Do not stop taking this drug without consulting your physician. Some conditions may get worse when the drug is suddenly stopped. Feeling well means the drug is working and is not a reason to stop.

Precautions:

Before taking this drug, tell your doctor if you have heart disease, liver disease or if you have any allergies. Patients with renal impairment or renovascular disease should be closely monitored by their physicians and may not be suited for taking this drug.

Women who are pregnant or are trying to get pregnant should not take Lotrel. Breast-feeding mothers should not take it as well. It is not known if this drug is excreted through breast milk.

Tell your doctor what medications you are currently taking. Drugs such as beta-blockers, cimetidine, cyclosporine and digoxin can cause ill side effects when taken with Lotrel.

Do not to take this medication within 2 hours of eating grapefruit.

Possible Side Effects:

- dizziness and lightheadedness, especially during the first few days
- fatigue
- nausea
- heartburn
- muscle cramps
- headaches
- hot flashes or flushing
- cough
- taste disturbance

Many of the side effects listed above will lessen or totally go away the longer you take the drug.

Notify your doctor immediately if you experience any breathing difficulty, swelling in your hands and feet, or if you detect an irregular heartbeat.