

# Long Acting Theophylline

BRAND NAME	GENERIC-NAME	DOSAGE FORM
Uniphyll@, various generic brands	Theophylline	Sustained release tablet Ventolin
Phyllocontin@	Arrinophylline	Sustained release tablet Ventolin

Long-acting theophylline is a “**preventer**” asthma drug that relaxes smooth muscles in the airways of the lungs. It is usually used in difficult-to control asthma and must always be taken together with an anti-inflammatory medication such as a corticosteroid.

Long-acting theophylline does not work quickly enough to stop an acute asthma episode. If you have difficulty breathing, tightness, wheezing, or coughing and need relief, use the “**reliever**” inhaler your doctor has prescribed for you. If you require your reliever inhaler more than **3 times per week**, talk to your doctor. It is a sign that your asthma is poorly controlled. Ask your doctor about providing you with a **written Asthma Action Plan**, which allows you to adjust your medication according to your symptoms and peak-flow measurements.

Take your dose as instructed by your doctor and at the same time each day. Blood tests to check the amount of theophylline in your bloodstream are required to regulate the dose. Inform your doctor of all medications you are taking, if you stop or start smoking, or if you develop a fever or a flu-like illness as your theophylline blood level may need to be checked.

Long-acting theophylline must not be crushed or chewed. For easier swallowing, the tablet can be divided along the score line.

## SIDE EFFECTS:

SIDE EFFECT	MANAGEMENT
Stomach upset	Take your dose with food or milk.
Headache	
Caffeine-like stimulation causing a nervous or restless feeling	Avoid caffeine-containing drinks

These effects often disappear after the first week of treatment. Contact your doctor if these symptoms persist, or if you experience a rapid heart rate, confusion, or vomiting. These may be signs of too much medication.

## MISSED DOSES:

If you are taking your medicine twice a day, do not take a double dose to make up for a missed dose.

## For Uniphyll@:

Take your usual dose if you remember within 6 hours.

Take half your usual dose if you remember between 6 and 18 hours.

Do not take your missed dose if you remember after 18 hours.