4. Possible side effects

3. How to use Qvar Aerosol

6. Contents of pack and other information

There may be times when you need to take steroid tablets as well as using your inhaler. Your doctor may prescribe this inhaler to replace steroid tablets, which may be necessary for a short time because your asthma is severe. If you have been treated for a long time with high doses of inhaled steroid, you may have developed steroid side effects. You may need to take a steroid tablet or injection to reduce the side effects. Your doctor may prescribe this inhaler to reduce the number of steroid tablets you are using. It is important to follow your doctor's advice. Whilst you are reducing the number of steroid tablets that you take you may feel generally unwell even though you can breathe as well or better. If this happens keep using your inhaler and tell your doctor. If you think your usual treatment is not working, for example your symptoms are not getting better, or your peak flow falls, please tell your doctor. Your asthma may be getting worse.

Qvar Aerosol is not recommended for use in children under 12 years. Qvar Aerosol is not recommended for use in children under 12 years.

What to do if you think your treatment is not working

If you use more Qvar Aerosol than you should

It is important that you take your dose as stated on the pharmacist's label, or as advised by your doctor. You should not increase or decrease your dose without seeking medical advice. If you accidentally take more puffs than recommended, please tell your doctor.

If you forget to use Qvar Aerosol

If you forget to use this inhaler at your usual time, take your recommended number of puffs as soon as you remember unless it is nearly time to use your inhaler again. DO NOT take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose. Then continue to use your inhaler regularly at the correct time, as prescribed by your doctor.

In particular tell your doctor if you are taking:

- Disulfiram
- Metronidazole.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding

If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or are breastfeeding, ask your doctor for advice before taking this medicine.

Driving and using machines

Qvar Aerosol is not known to affect your ability to drive or operate machinery.

Important information about some of the ingredients of Qvar:

- Qvar contains a small amount of alcohol.

2. How to use Qvar Aerosol

There are two strengths of Qvar aerosol available and your doctor will have chosen the strength which best suits your condition. Remember that it is important to use this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

This inhaler has a softer feel and a different taste than other inhalers you may have used before. This inhaler is an extra fine aerosol which results in more of each dose being delivered to your lungs. Your doctor may, therefore, prescribe a lower dose of this inhaler than your previously used inhaler.

Even when your doctor has prescribed a lower dose you may find that the number of puffs you are asked to take from this inhaler is the same as from your previous inhaler; this is because this inhaler may be a lower strength product (which means that each puff of this inhaler contains less beclometasone dipropionate than your old inhaler).

DO NOT take more puffs than your doctor has told you to. In some circumstances, your doctor may prescribe more than the usual number of puffs. The usual number of puffs to take is:

Qvar 50 Aerosol

Adults (including the elderly) and children over 12 years

- Mild Asthma
  The starting dose is one puff twice a day. This may be increased up to two puffs twice a day.

- Moderate Asthma
  The starting dose is two puffs twice a day. This may be increased up to four puffs twice a day.

- Severe Asthma
  The starting dose is four puffs twice a day. This may be increased up to eight puffs twice a day.

The maximum dose is a total of sixteen puffs a day.

Qvar 100 Aerosol

Adults (including the elderly) and children over 12 years

- Mild to Moderate Asthma
  The starting dose is one puff twice a day. This may be increased up to two puffs twice a day.

- Severe Asthma
  The starting dose is two puffs twice a day. This may be increased up to four puffs twice a day.

The maximum dose is a total of eight puffs a day.

Children under 12 years

Qvar Aerosol is not recommended for use in children under 12 years.

What to do if you think your treatment is not working

If you think your usual treatment is not working, for example your symptoms are not getting better, or are getting worse, or you need to use more puffs from your reliever inhaler, or if your reliever inhaler does not seem to be working as well as usual, or your peak flow falls, please tell your doctor. Your asthma may be getting worse.

If you use more Qvar Aerosol than you should

It is important that you take your dose as stated on the pharmacist's label, or as advised by your doctor. You should not increase or decrease your dose without seeking medical advice. If you accidentally take more puffs than recommended, please tell your doctor.

If you forget to use Qvar Aerosol

If you forget to use this inhaler at your usual time, take your recommended number of puffs as soon as you remember unless it is nearly time to use your inhaler again. DO NOT take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose. Then continue to use your inhaler regularly at the correct time, as prescribed by your doctor.
If you stop using Qvar Aerosol
This inhaler must be used regularly, even when you feel well. You must not stop using your inhaler unless your doctor tells you to.
Ask your doctor for a prescription for a replacement inhaler before this one is empty.
If your doctor decides to stop treatment, return the inhaler to your doctor or pharmacist for safe disposal.

Using your Qvar Aerosol inhaler

Before use:
• If this is a new inhaler or if you have not used your inhaler for two weeks or more, it must be tested before use by removing the mouthpiece cover and pressing down on the canister inside the inhaler.
Release 2 puffs into the air, away from you.

How to use your inhaler

1. Take the cover off the mouthpiece.
2. Breathe out as far as is comfortable and then immediately place the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips around it.
3. Start to breathe in slowly and deeply through your mouth and press down on the canister inside the inhaler as shown. This releases one puff of medicine. It is important that you carry on breathing in after the puff is released.
4. Hold your breath for 10 seconds, then breathe out slowly. If your doctor has prescribed more than one puff repeat steps 2 to 4 again. After use, replace the cover on the mouthpiece.

Some people find it difficult to press their inhaler and breathe in at the same time.
A spacer device helps to overcome this problem. The spacer that fits Qvar aerosol is called the AeroChamber Plus® spacer device. If you use the AeroChamber Plus® spacer device, please follow the instructions provided with it. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will be able to advise you about the AeroChamber Plus® device.
Alternatively your doctor may wish to prescribe the Qvar Autohaler® device which automatically releases a puff of medication as you breathe in.

How to tell when your Qvar Aerosol device is empty
When the canister is completely empty you will not feel or hear any propellant being discharged.

Cleaning instructions
For normal hygiene, the mouthpiece of your inhaler should be cleaned weekly with a clean, dry tissue or cloth. You should also rinse your mouth with water after using your inhaler.
Do not wash or put any part of your inhaler in water
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.
If immediately after taking a puff of this inhaler, you feel wheezy or tight chested do not take any more puffs. Use your reliever inhaler to help your breathing and contact your doctor immediately.

Stop using your inhaler and tell your doctor immediately or go to the casualty department at your nearest hospital if the following happens:
• an allergic reaction (swelling of the lips, face or neck leading to severe difficulty in breathing, skin rash or hives).
This is a very serious but rare side effect. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.
Treatment with Qvar Aerosol may affect the normal production of corticosteroids in the body. Keep using your inhaler but see your doctor as soon as possible if you become unwell, particularly with any of the following:
• abdominal pain
• weakness
• vomiting.

This is especially important if you have been exposed to other stress such as other illness, surgery, or infection.
The following side effects may also occur in patients taking beclometasone dipropionate. If you experience any of these effects, keep using your inhaler but see your doctor if they last for a while or they are worrying you:
• hoarseness
• a sore mouth or thrush (white spots in your mouth and throat). These are less likely if you rinse your mouth out with water after using your inhaler. If you get thrush your doctor may recommend a medicine to treat you
• feeling sick
• headache
• feeling dizzy or faint
• tremor
• change in taste
• increase in wheezing, shortness of breath and cough
• sleeping problems, depression or feeling worried, restless, nervous, over-excited or irritable. These effects are more likely to occur in children (Frequency not known).

At high doses, taken for prolonged periods the following side effects have been reported:
• bone thinning
• clouding of the lens of the eye (cataract) resulting in blurred vision
• loss of vision due to abnormally high pressure in the eye may occur.

Children or adolescents who are using the inhaler for a prolonged period may grow more slowly. Your doctor may therefore wish to monitor the height of a child receiving prolonged treatment with Qvar Aerosol.

Reporting of side effects
If you get side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard.
By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

3. How to store Qvar Aerosol
• Keep out of the sight and reach of children.
• Do not store above 25°C.
• Avoid storage in direct sunlight and heat. Protect from frost. You can use your inhaler at temperatures as low as -10°C.
• Do not use after the expiry date stated on the carton and blister. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.
• Caution: Pressurised canister. Do not puncture. Do not burn, even when empty.
• Medicines should not be disposed via wastewater or household waste. If your doctor decides to stop treatment, return the inhaler to your doctor or pharmacist for safe disposal. These measures will help to protect the environment.

Contents of pack and other information
Your Qvar aerosol does not contain CFCs; instead, the inhaler contains a hydrofluoroalkane (called propefhant HFA- 134a or norflurane) as an inactive ingredient. Hydrofluoroalkanes have been developed as a replacement for CFCs.

What Qvar Aerosol contains:
The active ingredient is beclometasone dipropionate.
Each actuation delivers 100 micrograms of active ingredient beclometasone dipropionate into the mouthpiece.
The other ingredients are HFA-134a (norflurane) and ethanol.

What Qvar Aerosol looks like and contents of the pack:
• Qvar Aerosol is a pressurised canister closed with a metering valve.
• Your inhaler contains 200 actuations.

For further information about asthma, contact Asthma UK, the independent UK charity working to conquer asthma: Asthma UK, Summit House, 70 Wilson Street, London, EC2A 2DB.
Asthma Helpline: 0845 7 010203 (Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, calls charged at local rates).