

LEUKOTRIENE MODIFIERS

What are other names for these medications?

Generic: Montelukast sodium, Zafirlukast, Zileuton

Trade Name: Singulair, Accolate, Zyflo

What do these drugs do?

Leukotriene modifiers work by fighting strong asthma causing chemicals (leukotrienes) produced in the body. Leukotrienes cause the smooth muscles of the airways to constrict (become smaller), making it difficult to breathe. Leukotrienes also encourage other cells to come to the airways which cause swelling of the airways. The combination of constriction and inflammation make the airways even smaller and make it more difficult to breathe. Leukotriene modifiers are long-term control medications and must be taken on a regular basis to be effective. This medication is **not** for use during an acute asthma attack.

How are these drugs taken?

Singulair comes in three forms: coated tablet, chewable tablet and oral granules. Accolate and Zyflo are available in tablet form.

What is the usual dose?

Singulair comes in 3 strengths (4 mg, 5 mg, and 10 mg) and is taken once a day. Accolate is available in 2 strengths (10 mg, 20mg) and is taken twice a day, one hour before a meal or 2 hours after a meal. Zyflo comes in one strength (600 mg) and is taken 4 times a day.

What are the side effects of this drug?

The most common side effects are headache and nausea. Abdominal pain and weakness may also occur.

What special instructions should be followed?

For these medications to work, they must be taken on a daily basis, even if the asthma seems better. Do not stop taking your medications unless instructed to do so by the health care provider.