

# Baclofen

Baclofen is a muscle relaxant that reduces alcohol cravings and anxiety related to alcohol withdrawal. It also helps binge eating. Baclofen works through similar neurotransmitter receptors as alcohol (GABA). Baclofen is not FDA-approved for alcohol abuse (but it is approved in Europe and is supported by controlled trials).

## Other uses

Baclofen may help gastric reflux, muscle cramps, spasms and tics, hiccups, and trigeminal neuralgia.

## How to take it

For alcohol, the dose ranges from 10-20 mg three times a day. Some people take baclofen as needed to reduce alcohol cravings. It can be taken with or without food. Alcohol may increase the drowsy effects of baclofen.

If you miss a dose, ask yourself if you are closer to the dose you missed (if so, take it late), or closer to the next dose you expected to take (if so, skip the missed dose and wait until your next dose).

## Side effects, risks and drug interactions

Baclofen is generally well tolerated. Side effects can include nausea, tiredness, dizziness, and stomach distress.

Baclofen is not a controlled substance and has a low addictive potential, but there are rare cases of people overusing it.

## How long should I take it for?

It is not known how long baclofen needs to be taken to prevent alcohol abuse. We will reassess this at each visit to determine the best time-frame for you.

## How to store and dispose of medication

- Keep out of the reach of children.
- Store away from heat, direct light and damp places.
- To safely dispose of unwanted pills: Do not pour in the toilet or sink (it will enter the water supply). To prevent children or pets from eating it, mix unwanted pills in a bag with a little water and inedible trash (such as coffee grounds or kitty litter) and throw in the trash.

—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 6/23/2025

## Baclofen

Brand name	Gablofen, Lioresel
Dose range	40 to 80 mg daily
Sizes	Tabs: 10, 20 mg (also available as injection)
Release date	1/20/1982
FDA-approval	Spasticity resulting from multiple sclerosis or other neurologic illness