

Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) basics

Treats some serious headaches. Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) works well for tension headaches, but isn't typically recommended as a first-line treatment due to the ability to overuse it and have withdrawal symptoms.

What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.

	Hours	Days	Weeks	Months	Long term
Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) Drug effectiveness	[Blue gradient bar]				
Possible side effects†	Hours	Days	Weeks	Months	Long term
Nausea	[Red gradient bar]				
Vomiting	[Red gradient bar]				
Drowsiness	[Red gradient bar]				
Stomach pain		[Red gradient bar]			
Dizziness	[Red gradient bar]				
Intoxicated feeling	[Red gradient bar]				

† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

Tips from pharmacists

- Take Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) as soon as your headache starts, then lie down in a dark room to help ease the pain.
- Be sure to take each dose with a full glass of water.
- Take your time getting up from sitting or lying down while taking Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) to decrease your chances of feeling dizzy.
- Be sure to limit how much caffeine you take while on Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) since it can cause nervousness, shakiness, and a fast heartbeat.
- While taking Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine), don't drink alcohol or take other drugs that slow your body down.
- Don't take other forms of acetaminophen (Tylenol) while taking Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine), since taking too much can lead to liver problems.

Risks and warnings

The FDA has identified these as possible serious or life-threatening risks with this medication. Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

Liver toxicity

Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) contains acetaminophen, also known as Tylenol or APAP. Taking too much acetaminophen causes liver damage that can be permanent and life-threatening. Using more than 4000 mg of the acetaminophen can cause serious harm to your liver, so be sure not to take more than the recommended dose of Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) or other medications that contain acetaminophen.

Potential for habit-forming, abuse, and misuse

Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) contains butalbital which has a high potential for being habit-forming. Misuse and addiction can lead to accidental overdose and death. Do not take more than what your doctor has prescribed you.

Hypersensitivity (allergic) reactions

Rarely, Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) can cause serious and life-threatening allergic reaction. If you develop a skin rash, fever, swelling, or have trouble breathing, get medical help right away. Furthermore, severe and fatal skin reactions (Stevens-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis) can happen anytime and as early as the first day while taking Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine). Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you notice sores or fluid-filled blisters on your skin, lips, or inside your mouth. You won't be able to re-start Fioricet (butalbital / acetaminophen / caffeine) if you experience this reaction.

