# Sodium Phenylbutyrate

2025

#### Newborn use only

Alert	Available through Special Access Scheme only.	
	Repeated boluses or very high doses of phenylbutyrate can saturate the scavenger-converting systems,	
	increasing the risk of drug accumulation and toxicity. <sup>1</sup>	
	Overdose can be fatal in children.	
Indication	Urea cycle defects	
Action	Sodium phenyibutyrate (NaPBA) is a precursor of sodium phenyiacetate (NaPA). NaPBA is first oxidised to	
	phenylacetate and then conjugated with glutamine to form phenylacetylglutamine (PAGA). This pathway	
	nothway 1-3	
	Ammonia Scavenger	
Trade Name	Amhutyrate Phehurane Ammonans	
Presentation		
resentation	Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Ambutyrate) 2g/10mL injection	
	ORAL:	
	Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Ambutyrate) 250mg/mL powder for oral solution	
	Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Pheburane) 483mg/g granule	
	Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Ammonaps) 940mg/g granule	
Dose	To be prescribed only on the advice of paediatric metabolic specialists/paediatrician specialised in	
	metabolic disorders.	
	Note: Sodium benzoate, sodium phenylbutyrate and L- arginine and can be infused together. A	
	combined infusion preparation is available (see preparation section)	
	IV for acute hyperammonaemia (ANMF consensus) <sup>1,2</sup>	
	Commence loading dose at 250 mg/kg over 90–120 minutes, followed by maintenance dose at 250 mg/kg	
	daily given as a continuous infusion over 24 hours (preferred) or rarely, on the advice of paediatric	
	metabolic specialist, as intermittent infusions in 4 divided doses.	
	Adjust dose according to response - Maximum 500 mg/kg daily.	
	Change to oral route when stable.	
	OPAL Maintananca traatmont <sup>12</sup>	
	250 mg/kg daily in 2 or 4 dosos	
	Adjust dose according to response - Maximum 600 mg/kg daily	
Dose adjustment	Theraneutic hypothermia - No information	
Dose aujustment	FCMQ – No information	
	Renal impairment – use with caution	
	Hepatic impairment – Use with caution.	
Maximum Dose	Oral: 600mg/kg/day in 3 to 6 divided doses.	
Route	IV	
	ORAL	
Preparation	IV	
-	Load / maintenance	
	Sodium phenylbutyrate single infusion preparation	
	Draw up 12.5 mL (2500mg) of sodium phenylbutyrate and add 37.5 mL of glucose 10% to make a final	
	volume of 50 mL with a concentration of 50 mg/mL.	
	Sodium benzoate, sodium phenylbutyrate and L-arginine combined infusion preparation	
	Draw up 12.5mL (2500mg) of sodium phenylbutyrate, 4.2mL (2500mg) of L-arginine hydrochloride and	
	12.5mL of sodium benzoate and add 20.8mL of glucose 10% to make a final volume of 50 mL with a	
	concentration of 50 mg/mL of sodium phenylbutyrate, L-arginine and sodium benzoate each.	
	ORAL:	
1	Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Ambutyrate) 250mg/mL powder for oral solution	

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	Add 80 mL purified water to powder, shake vigorously and allow to stand until powder completely dissolves.
Administration	<u>IV</u>
	Can be administered via central or peripheral venous routes.
	ORAL
	Give with meals.
Monitoring	Ammonia, amino acids, electrolytes, urea and creatinine, full blood count, liver function tests – Frequency
	as per the advice of metabolic physician.
Contraindications	Hypersensitivity to sodium phenylbutyrate or any component of the formulation
Precautions	Fluid retention
Drug Interactions	Corticosteroids, valproate may increase the ammonia concentration, dose increase of Sodium
	Phenybutyrate may be needed.
Adverse	May cause sodium and fluid retention.
Reactions	Metabolic acidosis, hypoalbuminaemia, hypernatraemia
Overdose	AUSTRALIA: Contact the Poisons Information Centre on <b>13 11 26</b> for information on the management of
	overdose
	NEW ZEALAND: Contact the National Poisons Centre on <b>0800 764 766</b> for information on the
	management of overdose.
Compatibility	Fluids: Glucose 10% <sup>4</sup>
	V site: Argining and adjum horzeste <sup>4</sup> (in practice as nor matchelic synarts can be made up in a solution
	yith arginine and codium benzoate)
Incompatibility	Eluids: No information. No information on linid emulcions <sup>4</sup>
incompationity	PN at V-cite: No information. No information on linid emulsions. PN at V-cite: No information. No information on linid emulsions $^4$
	Y site: No information
Stability	IV continuous infusion: In practice, the continuous IV infusion of sodium phenylbutyrate in D10W is
ottability	changed every 24 hours.
	Oral: Re-constituted solution has an expiry period of 28 days at room temperature (<25°C)
Storage	Store at room temperature (<25°C)
Excipients	IV
	2g/10mL vial contains 10.8mmol of Sodium.
	ORAL
	Solution: Sodium Phenylbutyrate (Ambutyrate) powder for 250mg/mL oral solution contains aspartame
	Granules: Each gram of sodium phenylbutyrate contains 124 mg (5.4 mmol) of sodium and 768 mg of
	sucrose, Other excipients - Ethylcellulose, Hypromellose, macrogol 1500, maize starch, povidone.
Special	
Comments	
Evidence	Background
	Ammonia is the nitrogen waste product from protein catabolism. Ammonia is present in all body fluids
	and exists primarily as ammonium ion at physiologic pH. Hyperammonemia is defined as a blood
	ammonia concentration greater than about 100 micromol/L in neonates or 50 micromol/L in children and
	adults (precise cut-offs vary, depending on individual laboratory normative ranges). A 5- to 10-fold
	increase in blood ammonia concentration usually is toxic to the nervous system. <sup>2</sup> In urea cycle defects
	(UCD), nitrogen removal is blocked, and nitrogen accumulates in the form of ammonia, causing acute
	episodes of hyperammonentia. <sup>2</sup> Hyperammonaentia can be caused by inbom errors of metabolism of
	acquired conditions such as total parenteral nutrition, liver failure and urinary tract infections due to
	protease sp.
	In Australia, sodium phenylacetate (NaPA) is now superseded by sodium phenylbutyrate (NaPBA). Sodium
	Phenylbutyrate is first oxidised to phenylacetate and then conjugated with glutamine to form
	phenylacetylglutamine, which is readily excreted in the urine. <sup>3</sup>
	Phenylbutyrate is usually given as the sodium salt in doses of 250 mg/kg/day but has been given in doses
	of up to 630 mg/kg/day. <sup>6</sup> It is usually thought that conjugation and excretion are almost complete, but

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	recoveries appear to be variable. If conjugation and excretion are complete, the nitrogen removed following 250 mg/kg and 630 mg/kg would be equivalent to 0.24 g and 0.6 g of protein/kg, respectively. <sup>7</sup> <b>Efficacy</b> Brusilow and colleagues reported a therapeutic protocol for the treatment of hyperammonemia in UCDs. Protocol included a combination of intravenous sodium benzoate, sodium phenylacetate, and arginine, and nitrogen-free intravenous alimentation. Dialysis was performed if the hyperammonemia was unresponsive to drug therapy. The combined therapy involved 12 episodes of hyperammonemia in 7 children ages 3 to 26 months. The plasma ammonia concentrations decreased to normal or nearly normal levels in all patients, except one. <sup>8</sup> <b>Guidelines</b>		
	10% at 250 mg/kg as bolus in 90-120 minutes, then maintenance 250-500 mg/kg/day. <sup>1</sup> British Inherited Metabolic Disease Group: The standard dose is 250 mg/kg/d in divided doses. This may be increased to 600 mg/kg/d in an emergency. <sup>3</sup>		
	After an intravenous load, phenylbutyrate is quickly converted to phenylacetate with saturable nonlinear kinetics. The subsequent conjugation to phenylacetylglutamine is rapid, so that the concentrations of phenylacetate remains low. The peak concentration of phenylacetate is between 1 and 2 hours and that of phenylacetylglutamine after 1 to 3.5 hours. <sup>7</sup>		
	When it is given orally, phenylbutyrate peak concentration is between 1- and 2-hours post dose and concentrations of phenylacetate and phenylacetylglutamine peak simultaneously at 3 hours. When repeated doses are given, the concentration of phenylacetate increase during the day, only returning baseline overnight. <sup>7</sup>		
	Adverse effects that can be extrapolated from other population to neonates include poor weight gain, acidosis and alkalosis, hypoalbuminemia, hyper- and hypophosphataemia, mucositis (ORAL route). The sided effects are not easy to distinguish between the effects of the disease and of the medication. <sup>7</sup>		
Practice points			
References	<ol> <li>Häberle J, Burlina A, Chakrapani A, Dixon M, Karall D, Lindner M, et al. Suggested guidelines for the diagnosis and management of urea cycle disorders: first revision. Journal of inherited metabolic disease. 2019;42(6):1192-230.</li> </ol>		
	2. Niemi A-K, Enns GM. Pharmacology review: sodium phenylacetate and sodium benzoate in the		
	<ol> <li>British Inherited Metabolic Disease Group. Medicines used for the tretament of hyperammonaemia. https://bimdg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Paeds_NH3_meds_NEW-DEC-VERSION.pdf. Downladed on 26 February 2025.</li> </ol>		
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	5. Husson M-C, Schiff M, Fouilhoux A, Cano A, Dobbelaere D, Brassier A, et al. Efficacy and safety of iv sodium benzoate in urea cycle disorders: a multicentre retrospective study. Orphanet journal of rare diseases. 2016;11:1-8.		
	<ol> <li>Brusilow SW. Phenylacetylglutamine may replace urea as a vehicle for waste nitrogen excretion. Pediatric research. 1991;29(2):147-50.</li> </ol>		
	7. Feillet F, Leonard J. Alternative pathway therapy for urea cycle disorders. Journal of inherited metabolic disease. 1998;21(Suppl 1):101-11.		
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