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## Review Article

# Carnisure (Levocarnitine): Comprehensive Therapeutic Review

Shaik Khalid\*, Dr. B. V. Ramana, Shaik Irshad Nufshrun

Dr. K. V. Subba Reddy Institute of Pharmacy, Kurnool.

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## ABSTRACT

Carnisure represents a critical therapeutic intervention for disorders of fatty acid metabolism and energy production. As a bio available form of L-carnitine, it serves as an essential cofactor for mitochondrial  $\beta$ -oxidation, particularly in high-energy demand tissues like cardiac and skeletal muscle. Clinically, it has demonstrated significant efficacy in managing both primary genetic deficiencies and secondary deficiency states arising from renal disease, hepatic dysfunction, or medication side effects. Beyond its established role in dialysis-associated complications, emerging research suggests potential applications in diverse areas including cardiovascular medicine, reproductive health, and neurological disorders. The safety profile remains favorable for most patient populations, with gastrointestinal symptoms representing the most frequently reported adverse effects. This review synthesizes current evidence regarding its mechanisms, clinical applications, dosing strategies, and safety considerations to guide optimal therapeutic use.

## INTRODUCTION

L-carnitine is a naturally occurring quaternary ammonium compound that plays a fundamental role in cellular energy metabolism. Synthesized endogenously from the amino acid's lysine and methionine, with additional dietary contributions from animal products, it serves as an indispensable shuttle for long-chain fatty acids into the mitochondrial matrix. Carnisure® addresses deficiency states that may result from genetic

defects in the OCTN2 transporter, increased losses during renal replacement therapy, impaired hepatic synthesis, or drug-induced depletion (particularly with valproate therapy). The availability of multiple formulations - including oral tablets, syrup, and intravenous preparations - allows for tailored therapeutic approaches across different clinical scenarios and patient populations. Its therapeutic effects extend beyond simple repletion to include modulation of

\*Corresponding Author: Shaik Khalid

Address: Dr. K. V. Subba Reddy Institute of Pharmacy, Kurnool.

Email ✉: [irshaddadsgirl@gmail.com](mailto:irshaddadsgirl@gmail.com)

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oxidative stress, glucose metabolism, and cellular detoxification pathways.

## MECHANISM OF ACTION

The pharmacological actions of Carnisure are multifaceted and tissue-specific:

### PRIMARY METABOLIC FUNCTIONS:

- Facilitates transmembrane transport of long-chain fatty acids via the coordinated action of CPT-I, CPT-II, and CACT proteins
- Maintains critical intramitochondrial acetyl-CoA/CoASH ratios
- Prevents toxic accumulation of acyl-CoA intermediates in organic acidemias

### SECONDARY THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS:

- Modulates insulin sensitivity through effects on lipid metabolism
- Exhibits antioxidant properties by reducing reactive oxygen species
- Stabilizes cellular membranes through phospholipid interactions
- Influences apoptotic signaling pathways in stressed tissues

These diverse mechanisms explain its therapeutic utility across multiple organ systems and disease states, particularly in tissues with high energy demands like myocardium, skeletal muscle, and spermatozoa. The drug's ability to enhance mitochondrial efficiency underlies many of its emerging clinical applications.

## CLINICAL INDICATIONS

### ESTABLISHED THERAPEUTIC USES:

- Primary systemic carnitine deficiency (OMIM #212140):

- Prevents life-threatening hypoglycemic episodes
- Arrests progression of associated cardiomyopathy
- Reduces skeletal muscle symptoms and weakness

### END-STAGE RENAL DISEASE COMPLICATIONS:

- End-stage renal disease complications:
- Improves dialysis-related fatigue and exercise intolerance
- Reduces erythropoiesis-stimulating agent requirements by 30-50%
- May improve quality of life markers

### EMERGING APPLICATIONS

### CHRONIC HEART FAILURE MANAGEMENT:

- Potential improvement in ventricular function
- May enhance exercise capacity in clinical trials

### MALE FACTOR INFERTILITY:

- Demonstrated improvements in sperm motility parameters
- Reduces oxidative damage to sperm membranes

### NEUROPROTECTIVE POTENTIAL:

- Investigational use in neurodegenerative disorders
- Possible mitochondrial stabilization effects

### EVIDENCE OF EFFICACY

Recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses have substantiated:



- Consistent hemoglobin improvements (mean increase 1.0-1.5 g/dL) in dialysis populations
- Significant reduction in muscle symptoms (78% response rate) in deficiency states
- Modest but measurable cardiac benefits in clinical trials:
- 5-10% improvement in left ventricular ejection fraction
- Reduced frequency of angina episodes
- Ongoing clinical investigations are exploring:
- Hepatoprotective effects in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease
- Potential benefits in age-related muscle wasting
- Role in critical illness recovery and outcomes
- Performance enhancement in athletic populations

The evidence base continues to expand, though larger controlled trials are needed for many off-label applications.

## **DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **ORAL MAINTENANCE THERAPY:**

- Adults: 990-1980 mg daily in divided doses
- Pediatric: 50-100 mg/kg/day based on severity

### **INTRAVENOUS PROTOCOLS:**

- Hemodialysis patients: 10-20 mg/kg post-dialysis
- Acute metabolic crises: 100 mg/kg loading dose

### **SPECIAL POPULATION CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Renal impairment: Requires dose reduction (30-50%) and monitoring

- Hepatic dysfunction: Monitor ammonia levels closely
- Geriatric patients: Adjust for age-related renal changes
- Pediatric administration: Syrup preferred for accurate dosing

## **MONITORING PARAMETERS**

- Plasma carnitine levels in deficiency states
- Renal function tests in chronic therapy
- TMAO levels in patients with CKD
- INR for patients on concurrent warfarin

## **SAFETY PROFILE**

### **Common Adverse Reactions:**

- Gastrointestinal disturbances (15-25% incidence):
- Typically, mild and dose-dependent
- Often improve with continued therapy
- Characteristic odor (10-15% of patients):
- Related to TMAO metabolism
- May require dose adjustment

### **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS:**

- Neurological effects with rapid IV administration
- Enhanced anticoagulation with warfarin
- Potential metabolic acidosis at high doses
- Possible arrhythmogenic effects in overdose

### **RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES:**

- Slow IV infusion protocols
- Regular INR monitoring with anticoagulants
- Dose adjustment in renal impairment
- Patient counseling regarding odor management

## **DISCUSSION**



- Current clinical challenges in Carnisure® use include:
- Defining optimal duration for off-label applications
- Establishing cost-effectiveness in chronic conditions
- Developing biomarkers for treatment response

#### **KEY AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS:**

- Long-term cardiovascular implications of TMAO elevation
- Synergistic combinations with other metabolic agents
- Population-specific pharmacokinetic studies

#### **THE DRUG'S UNIQUE POSITION IN THERAPY STEMS FROM ITS:**

- Dual role as replacement therapy and metabolic modulator
- Broad tissue distribution and multiple mechanisms
- Generally favorable safety profile
- Future research directions should prioritize:
- Multicenter randomized controlled trials
- Mechanistic studies in novel applications
- Health economic evaluations

#### **CONCLUSION**

Carnisure remains an essential therapeutic agent for carnitine deficiency disorders with expanding applications in modern medicine. Its well-established benefits in genetic disorders and dialysis patients continue to be complemented by emerging evidence in cardiology, reproductive medicine, and neurology. The drug's multifaceted mechanisms of action - ranging from classical metabolic functions to pleiotropic cellular effects - underlie its broad therapeutic potential.

- Clinical use requires careful consideration of:
- Evidence-based indications versus investigational uses
- Individualized dosing strategies
- Appropriate monitoring protocols
- Future research should focus on:
- Confirming efficacy in expanding indications
- Clarifying long-term safety profiles
- Developing precision medicine approaches

The integration of Carnisure into therapeutic regimens should balance proven benefits with judicious exploration of emerging applications, always guided by rigorous clinical evidence and patient-specific factors.

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