Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Dienogest

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: Canada

ASPEN-Dienogest; JAMP Dienogest; Visanne

Warning

- In teenagers, the use of this drug has been linked to slower bone growth and weaker bones. This may not always go back to normal after treatment is stopped. Effects on the bones may be greater the longer this drug is taken. Smoking may also affect bone strength. It is not known how this drug will affect the bones later in life and the risk of osteoporosis (brittle bones). Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat pelvic pain caused by endometriosis. If you have been given this drug for some other reason, talk with your doctor for more information.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

For all patients taking this drug:

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have ever had any of these health problems: Breast cancer or other cancer where hormones make it grow, diseased arteries in the brain or heart, heart attack, migraine headaches, liver problems like a liver tumor, or stroke.
- If you have any of these health problems: Blood clots, blood vessel problems caused by diabetes, or eyesight problems due to blood vessel problems in the eye like loss of eyesight.
- If you have unexplained vaginal bleeding.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.
- If you are taking steroids like danazol.

Children:

- If your child has not yet had a period.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists. This drug may need to be stopped before certain types of surgery as your doctor has told you. If this drug is stopped, your doctor will tell you when to start taking this drug again after your surgery or procedure.
- Do not take this drug for longer than you were told by your doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Talk with your doctor if you will need to be still for long periods of time like long trips, bedrest after surgery, or illness. Not moving for long periods may raise your chance of blood clots.
- Do not smoke. Smoking raises the chance of heart disease. Talk with your doctor.
- Be sure to have regular breast exams and gynecology check-ups. You will also need to do breast self-exams as you have been told.
- This drug may cause dark patches of skin on your face. Avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun.
- If you drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit often, talk with your doctor.
- If you are allergic to lactose or have lactose intolerance, talk with your doctor.
- Take calcium and vitamin D as you were told by your doctor.
- This drug may stop you from having a period (menstrual bleeding) for some time. This is not a method of birth control.

- Use a non-hormone type of birth control like condoms to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug. Do not use birth control pills or other hormone-based birth control while using this drug.
- A pregnancy test will be done to show that you are NOT pregnant before starting this drug. If you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.
- If you get pregnant while taking this drug, the chance of pregnancy outside of the uterus (ectopic pregnancy) may be raised. Talk with your doctor.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- A lump in the breast, breast pain or soreness, or nipple discharge.
- Change in eyesight.
- Depression or other mood changes.
- Pelvic pain or pressure.
- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of a blood clot like chest

pain or pressure; coughing up blood; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or trouble speaking or swallowing.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Tender breasts.
- Enlarged breasts.
- Weight gain.
- Period (menstrual) changes. These include spotting or bleeding between cycles.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Lowered interest in sex.
- Pimples (acne).
- Hair loss.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Feeling irritable.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Take with or without food.
- If you throw up or have diarrhea within 3 to 4 hours of taking this drug, take 1 more dose.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses on the same day.
- If you are not sure what to do if you miss a dose, call your doctor.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store in the original container at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider’s examination and assessment of a patient’s specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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