



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

AHCC

This information describes the common uses of AHCC, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

Active Hexose Correlated Compound (AHCC) is a group of chemicals that are taken from fungi, like mushrooms, and turned into a supplement. People take this supplement to help their immune system.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

AHCC is taken to:

- Treat cancer
- Treat infections
- Improve liver function

While AHCC is used for these reasons, there isn't enough research to say that it works. Talk with your healthcare provider before taking AHCC.

Herbal supplements can interact with some medications and affect how they work. For more information, read the "What else do I need to know?" section below.

What are the side effects?

Side effects reported in a clinical study included:

- Diarrhea (loose or watery bowel movements)
- Mild itching

What else do I need to know?

- Talk to your doctor if you're taking doxorubicin (Lipodox[®]) and ondansetron (Zuplenz) as part of your cancer treatment. AHCC may decrease the effects of these medications.
- Talk to your doctor if you're taking aromatase inhibitors. AHCC can reduce their activity.

Aromatase inhibitors are medications that stop an enzyme called aromatase from changing hormones into estrogen. Examples of aromatase inhibitors include letrozole (Femara[®]) and anastrozole (Arimidex).

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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