

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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## What is it?

Alpha-lipoic acid is a chemical your body makes. It's also found in foods such as red meat, spinach, broccoli, tomatoes, peas, Brussel sprouts, and rice bran.

You can take alpha-lipoic acid as a dietary supplement. It comes as tablets or capsules.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

Your body uses alpha-lipoic acid to make energy. Alpha-lipoic acid is also used to:

- Treat nerve pain due to diabetes
- Treat liver disease

Alpha-lipoic acid has other uses, but doctors haven't studied them to see if they work.

It's generally safe to eat foods that have alpha-lipoic acid. Talk with your healthcare providers before taking alpha-lipoic acid supplements. Supplements are stronger than compounds that are naturally found in foods. They can also 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 of using alpha-lipoic acid may include:

- Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up)
- Vomiting (throwing up)
- Low blood sugar level

## What else do I need to know?

- Talk with your healthcare provider if you take drugs that lower your blood sugar level. If you do, alpha-lipoic acid may be harmful because it also lowers your blood sugar level.

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](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

Alpha-Lipoic Acid - Last updated on June 29, 2022

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