



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Capecitabine

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: US

Xeloda

Brand Names: Canada

ACH-Capecitabine; SANDOZ Capecitabine; TARO-Capecitabine; TEVA-Capecitabine; Xeloda

Warning

- Severe and sometimes deadly bleeding problems have happened in people taking this drug with some blood thinners like warfarin. This has happened within several days and up to several months after this drug was started. Rarely, this has happened within 1 month after this drug was stopped. Your risk for bleeding problems may be higher because you have cancer, and if you are older than 60 years of age. If you are taking a blood thinner, talk with your doctor. You may need to have your blood work checked more often.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat colorectal cancer.
- It is used to treat breast cancer.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take 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 a dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) deficiency or kidney disease.
- If you are taking allopurinol.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. This drug may cause harm to an unborn baby. A pregnancy test will be done before you start this drug to show that you are NOT pregnant. If you may become pregnant, you must use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Ask your doctor how long to use birth control. If you get pregnant, call your doctor right away.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug and for 2 weeks after your last dose.

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.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Diarrhea is common with this drug and can be severe. Call your doctor to find

out what to do if you have diarrhea or stomach cramps. You will need to take care not to become dehydrated. Do not try to treat diarrhea without first checking with your doctor.

- Dehydration has happened in people taking this drug. Dehydration may cause severe kidney problems that can be deadly. The chance may be higher in people who already have kidney problems or who are taking drugs that can cause kidney problems. The chance may also be raised in people who have loss of appetite, upset stomach, throwing up, diarrhea, or weakness. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- Call your doctor right away if you have any signs of infection like fever, chills, flu-like signs, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or a wound that will not heal.
- The chance of severe and sometimes deadly side effects is raised in patients who do not have the enzyme dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) in the body. These include mouth irritation or sores, diarrhea, low white blood cell counts, or nerve problems.
- Heart problems like heart attack, heart failure, and a heartbeat that does not feel normal have happened with this drug. Sudden deaths have also happened. These effects may be more common in people who have ever had heart disease before. Talk with your doctor.
- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- A problem called hand and foot syndrome can happen. If it is bad or lasts for a long time, this can lead to loss of fingerprints. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are over the age of 60, use this drug with care. You could have more side

effects.

- This drug may affect fertility. Fertility problems may lead to not being able to get pregnant or father a child. If you plan to get pregnant or father a child, talk with your doctor before taking this drug.
- If your sex partner may get pregnant, you must use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Ask your doctor how long to use birth control. If your partner gets pregnant, call the doctor right away.

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 bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- Signs of fluid and electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, very bad dizziness or passing out, fast heartbeat, more thirst, seizures, feeling very tired or weak, not hungry, unable to pass urine or change in the amount of urine produced, dry mouth, dry eyes, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of heart problems like chest pain, fast heartbeat, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, or shortness of breath.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Swelling.

- Dark urine or yellow skin or eyes.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- Change in eyesight, eye pain, or very bad eye irritation.
- Redness or irritation of the palms of hands or soles of feet.
- Swollen gland.
- Mood changes.
- Swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm.

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:

- Hair loss.
- Stomach pain.
- Constipation.
- Headache.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Change in nails.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Eye irritation.
- Dry skin.
- Back, bone, joint, or muscle pain.
- Change in taste.
- Weight loss.
- Flushing.

- Diarrhea, throwing up, upset stomach, and feeling less hungry are common with this drug. If these happen, talk with your doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not get better, or get very bad.

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 after a meal, within 30 minutes.
- Swallow whole with a full glass of water.
- If you have trouble swallowing this drug whole, talk with your doctor. There may be other ways to take this drug.
- You will need to take special care when handling this drug. Check with the doctor or pharmacist to see how to handle this drug.
- If the tablets must be cut or crushed, do not do it by yourself. A healthcare provider will need to cut or crush the tablets if needed.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.

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 at the same time or extra doses.

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

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep lid tightly closed.
- 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine. The use of this information is governed by the Lexicomp End User License Agreement, available at

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Last Reviewed Date

2021-06-15

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

Capecitabine - Last updated on October 14, 2021

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