Famotidine

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
Acid Controller Max St [OTC]; Acid Controller Original Str [OTC]; Acid Reducer Maximum Strength [OTC]; Acid Reducer [OTC]; Heartburn Relief Max St [OTC]; Heartburn Relief [OTC]; Pepcid; Pepcid AC Maximum Strength [OTC]

Brand Names: Canada
ALTI-Famotidine; APO-Famotidine; BCI-Famotidine [DSC]; CO Famotidine; Famotidine Omega W-O Preserv; Famotidine Omega W-Preserv; GMD-Famotidine; MYLAN-Famotidine [DSC]; TEVA-Famotidine

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent GI (gastrointestinal) ulcers.
- It is used to treat gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD; acid reflux).
- It is used to treat heartburn and sour stomach.
- It is used to treat syndromes caused by lots of stomach acid.
- 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 have an allergy to famotidine or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face,
lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

- If you have any of these health problems: Black or bloody stools; heartburn with light-headedness, sweating, or dizziness; chest pain; shoulder pain with shortness of breath; pain that spreads to the arms, neck, or shoulders; light-headedness; sweating a lot; throwing up blood; or trouble or pain swallowing food.

- If you are taking any of these drugs: Cefditoren, dasatinib, delavirdine, or fosamprenavir.

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?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.

- If you have kidney problems or are elderly, talk with your doctor. Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there); seizures; and feeling agitated, confused, sluggish, or out of sorts have happened in people with kidney problems and in older people.

- This drug may prevent other drugs taken by mouth from getting into the body. If you take other drugs by mouth, you may need to take them at some other time than this drug. Talk with your doctor.

- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.
• Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

Tablets and chewable tablets:

• If you need Pepcid® AC for more than 14 days in a row, 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.

• Dizziness or passing out.

• A fast heartbeat.

• A heartbeat that does not feel normal.

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.

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.

How is this drug best taken?

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

**All oral products:**
- Take with or without food.
- Ask your doctor before you take antacids with this drug.

**Chewable tablet:**
- Chew or crush well. Do not swallow it whole.

**Liquid (suspension):**
- Shake well before use.
- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

**Injection:**
- It is given as a shot into a vein.

**What do I do if I miss a dose?**

**All oral products:**
- If you take this drug on a regular basis, 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.
- Many times this drug is taken on an as needed basis. Do not take more often than told by the doctor.

**Injection:**
- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

**How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**
All oral products:

- Store at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Liquid (suspension):

- Throw away any part not used after 1 month.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- 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.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- 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.
- 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.

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

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