



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# 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 gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD; acid reflux).
- It is used to treat or prevent GI (gastrointestinal) ulcers.
- 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 your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## **What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?**

- If your child has an allergy to any part of this drug.
- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Black or bloody stools; heartburn with lightheadedness, sweating, or dizziness; chest pain; shoulder pain with shortness of breath; pain that spreads to the arms, neck, or shoulders; lightheadedness; sweating a lot; throwing up blood; or trouble or pain swallowing food.
- If your child is 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 the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for your child to take this drug with all of his/her drugs and health

problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

## **What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

### **All products:**

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If your child has kidney problems, talk with your child's 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.
- This drug may prevent other drugs taken by mouth from getting into the body. If your child takes other drugs by mouth, you may need to give them at some other time than this drug. Talk with the doctor.

### **If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:**

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

### **Tablets and chewable tablets:**

- If your child needs Pepcid® AC for more than 14 days in a row, talk with healthcare provider.

## **What are some side effects that I need to call my child's 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 child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has 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 child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child 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 child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

### **How is this drug best given?**

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### **All oral products:**

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Ask the doctor before you give your child antacids with this drug.

### **Chewable tablet:**

- Have your child chew or crush well. Do not let your child 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 my child misses a dose?**

### **All oral products:**

- If your child takes this drug on a regular basis, give a missed

dose as soon as you think about it.

- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- Many times this drug is given on an as needed basis. Do not give to your child more often than told by the doctor.

### **Injection:**

- Call your child's 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 child's 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 child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child 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 child's 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.

### **Last Reviewed Date**

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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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