Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Anastrozole

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Arimidex

Brand Names: Canada

ACH-Anastrozole; AG-Anastrozole; APO-Anastrozole; Arimidex; BIO-Anastrozole; CCP-Anastrozole [DSC]; JAMP-Anastrozole; Mar-Anastrozole; MINT-Anastrozole; NAT-Anastrozole; PMS-Anastrozole; PRO-Anastrozole; RIVA-Anastrozole; SANDOZ Anastrozole; TARO-Anastrozole; TEVA-Anastrozole

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat breast cancer after menopause. If you have been given this drug for some other reason, talk with your doctor for more information.

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 are taking any of these drugs: Estrogen products or tamoxifen.
- If you have not been through menopause or you are still able to have a baby.
- 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 your blood work and bone density checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug lowers the estrogen in your body, which may cause your bones to get thinner and weaker. This may raise the chance of broken bones like in the spine, hip, and wrist. Talk with your doctor.
- High cholesterol has happened with this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause fertility problems. This may affect being able to have children. Talk with the doctor.
- 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, use birth control while taking this drug and for at least 3 weeks after your last dose. If you get pregnant, call your 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 liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Signs of a urinary tract infection (UTI) like blood in the urine, burning or pain when passing urine, feeling the need to pass urine often or right away, fever, lower stomach pain, or pelvic pain.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Swollen gland.
- Bone pain.
- Shortness of breath.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Depression or other mood changes.
- Change in eyesight.
- Breast pain.
- Vaginal bleeding that is not normal.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.
- People who have ever had a block in their heart blood vessels (ischemic heart disease) may have more signs of problems with blood flow to the heart. Call your doctor right away if you have new or worse chest pain or shortness of breath.

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:

- Hot flashes.
- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Heartburn.
- Back, muscle, or joint pain.
- Joint swelling.
- Pelvic pain.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Cough.
- Sore throat.
- Weight gain.
- Anxiety.
- Sweating a lot.
- Flu-like signs.
- Dry mouth.

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 with or without food.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

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 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.

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- 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 generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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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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