PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Everolimus

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

Afinitor; Afinitor Disperz; Torpenz; Yulithira; Zortress

Brand Names: Canada

Afinitor; Afinitor Disperz; NAT-Everolimus; PMS-Everolimus; REDDY-Everolimus; SANDOZ Everolimus; TEVA-Everolimus

Warning
Zortress®

- This drug may raise the chance of very bad and sometimes deadly infections. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of getting cancer like lymphoma or skin cancer. Talk with the doctor.
- In people who have had a kidney transplant, the risk of a blood clot in the kidney transplant may be raised. This may lead to loss of the kidney. Most of the time, this has happened within the first 30 days after the kidney transplant. Call the doctor right away if your child has back, groin, or belly pain; is not able to pass urine; has blood in the urine, dark urine, a fever, or an upset stomach; or is throwing up.
- If your child is taking this drug with cyclosporine, your child will need a lower dose of cyclosporine. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug is not to be used if your child has had a heart transplant. More deaths were seen in people taking this drug after a heart transplant. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat certain types of tumors that happen along with a condition called tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC).
- It is used to help treat seizures that happen along with TSC.
- It is used to keep the body from harming the organ after an organ transplant.
- 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 is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has an infection.
- If you have been told that your child's body has problems with certain sugars (lactose, glucose, galactose). Some products have lactose.
- If your child is taking any drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) that must not be taken with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, depression, and others. There are many drugs that must not be taken with this drug.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug. Your child may also need to avoid breast-feeding a baby for some time after the last dose. Talk with your child's doctor to see if your child needs to avoid breast-feeding a baby after the last dose.

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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- High blood sugar has happened with this drug. This includes diabetes that is new or worse.
- Check your child's blood sugar as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug may cause high cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Talk with the doctor.
- Avoid giving your child grapefruit and grapefruit juice.
- Your child may have more chance of getting an infection. Some infections have been deadly. Have your child wash hands often. Have your child stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- If your child has had hepatitis B before or carries the virus, talk with your child's doctor. This drug can cause the virus to become active again.
- Talk with the doctor before your child gets any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of very bad infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- This drug may affect how wounds heal. If your child has surgery, you may need to stop giving this drug before surgery. Start giving it again after surgery as you are told by the doctor. Call the doctor right away if your child has a wound that does not heal or any other wound problems.
- This drug may affect fertility. Fertility problems may lead to not being able to get pregnant or father a child. If your child plans to get pregnant or father a child, talk with the doctor before your child takes this drug.
- If your child is of childbearing age, a pregnancy test will need to be done before starting this drug to make sure your child is not pregnant.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy.
- If your child may become pregnant, have your child use birth control while taking this drug and for 8 weeks after the last dose. If your child gets pregnant, call the doctor right away.
- If your child's sex partner may become pregnant, they may need to use birth control while taking this drug. They may also need to use birth control for 4 weeks after your child's last dose. Be sure you know how long your child needs to use birth control. If your child's partner gets pregnant, call the doctor right away.

Zortress®

- There is a chance of skin cancer. Have your child avoid lots of sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and dress your child in clothing and eyewear that protects your child from the sun.
- In people who have had a liver transplant, the risk of a blood clot in the liver transplant may be raised. This may lead to loss of the liver or death. Most of the time, this has happened within the first 30 days after the liver transplant. Talk with the doctor.

All other products:

- Make sure your child avoids being near anyone who has had a recent live vaccine. There are many types of live vaccines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If your child has ever had or will be having radiation treatment, talk with the doctor. Worse side effects from radiation treatment have happened with this drug.

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:

All products:

- 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 infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- 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 high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- 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 electrolyte problems like mood changes; confusion; muscle pain, cramps, or spasms; weakness; shakiness; change in balance; an abnormal heartbeat; seizures; loss of appetite; or severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Redness or irritation of the palms of hands or soles of feet.

- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Flushing.
- Chest pain.
- Fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Seizures.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Mood changes.
- Change in the way your child acts.
- Swelling.
- Some people have had lung problems with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has signs of lung problems like shortness of breath or other trouble breathing, cough that is new or worse, or fever.
- Severe and sometimes deadly kidney problems have happened with this drug. Call the doctor right away if your child is unable to pass urine, has blood in the urine, or has a change in the amount of urine passed.

If your child has menstrual periods:

- Period (menstrual) changes. These may include a missed period.

Zortress®

- Change in color or size of a mole.
- A skin lump or growth.
- Swollen gland.
- Night sweats.
- A big weight loss.
- Some people treated with this drug have had very bad kidney problems caused by a certain viral infection (BK virus). In people who have had a kidney transplant, BK virus infection may cause loss of the kidney. Call the

doctor right away if your child has signs of kidney problems like change in the amount of urine passed, trouble passing urine, pain when passing urine, or blood in the urine.

- A severe brain problem called progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) may happen with this drug. It may cause disability or death. Tell the doctor right away if your child has signs like confusion, memory problems, depression, change in the way your child acts, change in strength on 1 side is greater than the other, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, or change in eyesight.

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:

- Feeling tired or weak.
- Headache.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Pimples (acne).
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Change in taste.
- Weight loss.
- Dry mouth.
- Dry skin.
- Change in nails.
- Hair loss.
- Joint pain.
- Back pain.

- Pain in arms or legs.
- Muscle spasm.
- Nosebleed.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Mouth irritation and mouth sores are common with this drug. These side effects may happen as early as a few days after getting this drug. Do what the doctor or other health care provider tells you to prevent mouth irritation or mouth sores. Call the doctor if mouth irritation or mouth sores are severe, bother your child, or do not go away.

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 products:

- Give this drug with or without food but give it the same way each time. Always give with food or always give on an empty stomach.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.

Tablets:

- Give this drug with a full glass of water.
- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush. Do not let your child take a tablet that has been broken or crushed.
- Some products may come in blister cards. Some blister cards may have

blisters with desiccants in them. A desiccant helps protect the drug from moisture and should not be eaten. If your child's drug comes in blister cards, be sure you know if any of the blisters have a desiccant in them. Do NOT give your child the desiccants. If you are not sure or you have questions, talk with the pharmacist.

Disperz tablets:

- Give as a liquid only. Do not let your child swallow tablets whole.
- Wear gloves when touching this drug.
- Mix with water as you have been told before drinking.
- Have your child drink right after mixing. Throw away any part not used after 1 hour.
- If possible, a person who is pregnant or plans to get pregnant must not mix this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

Zortress®

- If your child takes cyclosporine or tacrolimus, give them at the same time as this drug.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

Zortress®

- 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.

All other products:

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it has been more than 6 hours since the missed 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.

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

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Store in original container.
- 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.
- 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 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.

Last Reviewed Date

2026-06-02

Copyright

© 2026 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

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.

Everolimus - Last updated on December 12, 2022
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center