Megestrol

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
Megace ES; Megace Oral [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada
Megace OS; Megestrol

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to help raise feelings of hunger.
- It is used to treat endometrial or 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 have an allergy to megestrol acetate 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 are taking dofetilide.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug to help raise feelings of hunger if you are pregnant.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.
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.
- High blood sugar has happened with this drug. This includes diabetes that is new or worse. Talk with the doctor.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug may lower how much steroid your body makes. This may happen while taking this drug or after you stop taking it. Tell your doctor if you have a very bad infection, surgery, or injury. Call your doctor right away if you have very bad dizziness or passing out, very upset stomach or throwing up, or feeling very tired or weak. You may need to take a steroid drug. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant.
- If you are able to get pregnant, your doctor may have you take a pregnancy test before starting this drug to show that you are NOT pregnant.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.
- If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, 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 high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, more thirst, more hungry, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Signs of Cushing’s disease like weight gain in the upper back or belly, moon face, very bad headache, or slow healing.
- Signs of a weak adrenal gland like a very bad upset stomach or throwing up, very bad dizziness or passing out, muscle weakness, feeling very tired, mood changes, not hungry, or weight loss.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Vaginal bleeding that is not normal.
- Mood changes.
- Lowered interest in sex.
- Not able to get or keep an erection.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Fever.
- Blood clots have happened with this drug. Sometimes, these blood clots have been deadly. Call your doctor right away if you have chest, arm, back, neck, or jaw pain or pressure; coughing up blood; numbness or weakness on 1 side of your body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, or change in eyesight; shortness of breath; or swelling, warmth, or pain in the 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:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Headache.
- More hungry.
- Weight gain.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Gas.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Hair loss.
- Hot flashes.
- Sweating a lot.
- Diarrhea.

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 products:

- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

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.
• Make sure you have the right liquid; there is more than one strength.

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?

All products:

• Store at room temperature.
• Store 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.

Liquid (suspension):

• Protect from heat.

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.

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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**

2019-01-22

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