

APO-Anastrozole Tablets

Anastrozole

Consumer Medicine Information

For a copy of a large print leaflet, Ph: 1800 195 055

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about anastrozole. It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using this medicine against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine. You may want to read it again.

What this medicine is used for

Anastrozole is used to treat breast cancer in women who no longer have their menstrual periods either naturally, due to their age or after surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy.

How it works

Anastrozole is a non-steroidal aromatase inhibitor, which reduces the amount of oestrogen (female sex hormone) made by the body. In some types of breast cancer, oestrogen can help the cancer cells grow. By blocking oestrogen, anastrozole may slow or stop the growth of cancer.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.

Your doctor may have prescribed this medicine for another reason.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

This medicine is not addictive.

Anastrozole is not recommended for use in children.

Before you take this medicine

When you must not take it

Do not take this medicine if you have an allergy to:

- anastrozole
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.
- Other anti-oestrogen medicines.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue, throat or other parts of the body
- rash, itching or hives on the skin.

Do not take anastrozole if you are still having menstrual periods.

Anastrozole should only be taken by women who are no longer having menstrual periods.

Do not take anastrozole if you are a man.

Men are not normally treated with anastrozole.

Do not take this medicine if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

Anastrozole may affect your developing baby if you take it during pregnancy. It may also pass into human breast milk.

Do not take this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking this medicine, talk to your doctor.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- liver or kidney problems
- osteoporosis, a family history of osteoporosis or risk factors for developing osteoporosis (such as smoking, a diet low in calcium, poor mobility, a slight build or treatment with steroid medicines)

Aromatase inhibitors may decrease bone mineral density (BMD) in women who have been through menopause, with a possible increased risk of fractures. Your doctor should discuss with you your treatment options for managing this possible increased risk of fractures.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start taking this medicine.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you get without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may interact with anastrozole. These include:

- tamoxifen, used to treat breast cancer
- any medicine that contains oestrogen (e.g. hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or oral contraceptives)
- any health food products that contain natural oestrogens used for post-menopausal symptoms.
- luteinising hormone releasing hormone (LHRH) agonists (e.g. goserelin or leuprorelin)

If you are taking any of these, you may need a different dose, or you may need to take different medicines.

Other medicines not listed above may also interact with anastrozole.

How to take this medicine

Follow carefully all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist.

They may differ to the information contained in this leaflet.

Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you how many tablets you will need to take each day. This depends on your condition and whether or not you are taking any other medicines.

If you do not understand the instructions on the box, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.

How much to take

The usual dose is one tablet taken once each day.

How to take it

Swallow anastrozole tablets whole, with a glass of water.

When to take it

Take this medicine at about the same time each day.

Taking it at the same time each day will have the best effect. It will also help you remember when to take it.

It does not matter if you take anastrozole with or without food.

How long to take it for

Continue taking your medicine for as long as your doctor tells you.

Anastrozole helps to control your condition, but does not cure it.

Do not stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to, even if you feel better.

Make sure you have enough to last over weekends and holidays.

If you forget to take it

If it is almost time to take your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time.

Otherwise take it as soon as you remember and then go back to taking your medicine as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for missed doses.

This may increase the chance of you experiencing side effects.

If you have trouble remembering to take your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) for advice or go to the Emergency department at your nearest hospital if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much of this medicine.

Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning. You may need urgent medical attention.

While you are taking this medicine

Things you must do

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, tell your doctor that you are taking this medicine.

If you become pregnant whilst taking anastrozole, tell your doctor immediately.

Tell any other doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you take this medicine.

Things you must not do

Do not give this medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Do not take your medicine to treat any other complaint unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not stop taking your medicine, or change the dosage, without first checking with your doctor.

Things to be careful of

Be careful when driving or operating machinery until you know how anastrozole affects you. Some patients may occasionally feel weak or sleepy.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking anastrozole.

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious but most of the time they are not.

Do not be alarmed by the following lists of side effects. You may not experience any of them.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any of the following:

- hot flushes
- feeling weak or sleepy, lack of energy
- joint pain or stiffness, bone pain or arthritis

- vaginal dryness or bleeding
- hair thinning or hair loss
- mild skin rash
- nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite (anorexia), diarrhoea
- headache
- carpal tunnel syndrome (tingling, pain, coldness, weakness in parts of hand)
- pins and needles
- loss of taste or changing taste of food or drink
- feelings of sadness or depression

The above list includes the more common side effects. Mostly, these are mild.

If you experience any of the following, stop taking your medicine and contact your doctor immediately or go to the Emergency department at your nearest hospital:

- Sudden signs of allergy such as shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty in breathing; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or any other parts of the body; rash, itching or hives on the skin.
- severe skin reactions with lesions, ulcers or blisters.
- liver pain or swelling and/or a general feeling of unwell with or without jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)

The above list includes very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

Anastrozole may be associated with changes in your blood, urine or liver.

Your doctor may want to perform tests from time to time to check on your progress and detect any side effects.

Uncommon side effects can include, trigger finger which is a condition in which one of your fingers or your thumb catches in a bent position.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed above may occur in some patients.

Storage and disposal

Storage

Keep your medicine in its pack until it is time to take it.

If you take your medicine out of its pack it may not keep well.

Keep your medicine in a cool dry place where the temperature will stay below 25°C.

Do not store your medicine, or any other medicine, in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it on a window sill or in the car.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep this medicine where children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking this medicine or the expiry date has passed, ask your pharmacist what to do with any medicine left over.

Product description

What it looks like

White, round, biconvex tablet, with '1' on one side.

Blister pack of 30 film-coated tablets.
AUST R 266676

Ingredients

Each tablet contains 1 mg of anastrozole as the active ingredient.

It also contains the following:

- lactose
- magnesium stearate
- sodium starch glycollate type A
- Opadry II white 85F18422.

This medicine does not contain gluten, sucrose, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

Sponsor

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This leaflet was prepared in August 2021.