

Alendronate (Fosamax®) Patient Information Sheet

Basic Information about Alendronate

- Alendronate (Fosamax®) is medication used to treat or prevent osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is weakening of the bones that increases the risk of broken bones, particularly in the spine, hip, or wrist. Alendronate is also used to treat a bone disease known as Paget's disease.
- Alendronate (Fosamax®) tablets come in 5 mg, 10 mg, 35 mg, 40 mg, and 70 mg sizes. **Your dose is on the other side of this form.**
- *Alendronate must be taken in a very specific manner for it to work, and so that it does not cause side effects. Please see the specific instructions listed below and on the other side of this form.*

What Side Effects Can Alendronate Cause?

- The most concerning side effect of alendronate is irritation to the esophagus (swallowing tube) or stomach. *The risk of these side effects is greatly reduced if you do not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking alendronate and if you lie down only after you have eaten.* If you have pain beneath your breastbone, pain with swallowing, difficulty swallowing, or your bowel movements turn red or black you should stop alendronate and notify your doctor.
- Alendronate can sometimes cause a rash or other side effects. If you develop a rash or have other unexplained symptoms, please report these to your doctor.

Are There Special Precautions for People Who Take Alendronate?

- If you have inflammation in your esophagus (swallowing tube) or a blockage in your esophagus that makes it difficult to swallow food, you should not take alendronate. If you have had stomach or intestinal ulcers in the past or if you have frequent heartburn (gastroesophageal reflux, GERD) you should not take alendronate unless specifically instructed to do so by your doctor.
- Alendronate should not be taken by people with certain types of kidney disease or low blood calcium.
- People who take alendronate must follow specific instructions when taking the medication. If the instructions are not followed, alendronate may not work to protect the bones or it may be more likely to cause side effects like irritation in the esophagus (swallowing tube). Specific instructions include the following:
 - Take alendronate after getting up, but *before* you have any food or drink except plain water (any food or coffee, juice, or mineral water will keep alendronate from working).
 - Take alendronate with a full glass of water.
 - Wait at least 30 minutes before eating any food or drinking anything besides water (drinking plain water is okay).
 - Do not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking alendronate *and* do not lie down until after you have eaten food.
- If you become pregnant, stop alendronate and notify your doctor.

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What is My Dose?

ALENDRONATE (FOSAMAX®)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 MG TABLET | <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE 1 PILL ONE MORNING PER WEEK (SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW*) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 MG TABLET | <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE ___ PILLS EACH MORNING (SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW*) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 MG TABLET | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40 MG TABLET | <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE 1 PILL EACH MORNING (SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW*) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 70 MG TABLET | <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE ___ PILLS ONE MORNING PER WEEK (SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW*) |

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING ALENDRONATE ONE MORNING PER WEEK*

- TAKE ALENDRONATE TABLETS ON THE SAME DAY EACH WEEK (FOR EXAMPLE, EVERY SUNDAY)
- TAKE ALENDRONATE AFTER GETTING UP, BUT *BEFORE* YOU HAVE ANY FOOD OR DRINK EXCEPT PLAIN WATER (ANY FOOD OR COFFEE, JUICE, OR MINERAL WATER WILL KEEP ALENDRONATE FROM WORKING)
- TAKE ALENDRONATE WITH A FULL GLASS OF WATER
- WAIT AT LEAST 30 MINUTES BEFORE EATING ANY FOOD OR DRINKING ANYTHING BESIDES WATER (DRINKING PLAIN WATER IS OKAY)
- DO NOT LIE DOWN FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES AFTER TAKING ALENDRONATE *AND* DO NOT LIE DOWN UNTIL AFTER YOU HAVE EATEN FOOD

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING ALENDRONATE EACH MORNING*

- TAKE ALENDRONATE AFTER GETTING UP, BUT *BEFORE* YOU HAVE ANY FOOD OR DRINK EXCEPT PLAIN WATER (ANY FOOD OR COFFEE, JUICE, OR MINERAL WATER WILL KEEP ALENDRONATE FROM WORKING)
- TAKE ALENDRONATE WITH A FULL GLASS OF WATER
- WAIT AT LEAST 30 MINUTES BEFORE EATING ANY FOOD OR DRINKING ANYTHING BESIDES WATER (DRINKING PLAIN WATER IS OKAY)
- DO NOT LIE DOWN FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES AFTER TAKING ALENDRONATE *AND* DO NOT LIE DOWN UNTIL AFTER YOU HAVE EATEN FOOD