Anastrozole (Arimidex®)
(“an AS troe zole”)

How drug is given: by mouth

Purpose: stops non-ovarian estrogen production in the body and may decrease growth of breast cancer

How to take the drug

• Take with or without food.

• If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not double dose.

• Try to take it at the same time every day.

• Check any supplements or herbs you are taking for estrogen or estrogen-like products. It’s important to discuss the use of supplements or herbs with your doctor or nurse.

Storage

• Store this medicine at room temperature, away from heat and moisture. Keep this medicine in its original container, out of the reach of children and pets.

Things that may occur during treatment

1. Hot flashes and/or sweats are common. As your body gets used to the drug, these may not bother you as much. Caffeine, spicy food, alcohol and stress may cause these to get worse. Mild exercise may help.

2. You may get a headache. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can take for this.

3. You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. This may develop over time and can occur in joints in both sides of your body at the same time, such as in both knees. This will go away when the drug is stopped. No damage is done to the joints.

4. You may have vaginal dryness which may cause discomfort during sex. Vaginal lubricants such as KY jelly, Astro Glide, or Replens may be helpful. Speak with your doctor or nurse for helpful options if these lubricants do not work.
The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects in this teaching sheet may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you take other medications. Please talk with your doctor or nurse if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your health care team.

If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your health care team right away.

Managing your oral chemotherapy schedule at home can be challenging. To help you with this, consider using tools to help you keep track of your schedule and any side effects you may have. You can find these tools online at www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary.