



Tamoxifen (Nolvadex[®])

("ta MOKS i fen")

How drug is given: by mouth

Purpose: blocks estrogen receptors in breast tissues, which may decrease the 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.**
- Take each dose at the same time every day.

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 adjusts 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. Report any spotting or bleeding that is not normal for you. This is important if you have gone through menopause. This drug may increase your risk for endometrial cancer.
3. Some patients may have mild nausea.
4. It is not safe to take this medicine during pregnancy. It could harm an unborn baby. Also, women should not breast-feed while receiving tamoxifen. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant or are planning to breast-feed.
5. Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise can also be helpful in maintaining your energy.

6. This drug may make it easier to get pregnant if you have not gone through menopause. Women with questions about fertility, birth control, or pregnancy should discuss concerns with their doctor.
 - Hormonal forms of birth control, such as birth control pills, implants, or shots, may not work while you are receiving tamoxifen. To keep from getting pregnant, use a barrier form of effective birth control and keep using it for at least 2 months after you stop treatment.
7. Leg cramping may occur.
8. You are at increased risk of blood clots. If you have pain, swelling or and/or warmth in one leg let your doctor or nurse know right away.

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.

THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS OR NOTES FOR THE PATIENT AND FAMILY: