

Megace* tablets

Megestrol acetate

What is in this leaflet

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

You should read this leaflet carefully before starting Megace. If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

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

What Megace is used for

Megace contains megestrol acetate a synthetic steroid which is similar to the naturally occurring hormone progesterone. Megestrol acetate competes with naturally occurring hormones for receptor sites in breast tissue, in this way preventing the naturally occurring hormones from stimulating breast cancer cells.

Megace is used to treat the symptoms of breast cancer.

Before you take Megace

When you must not take Megace

You must not take Megace if you have an allergy to megestrol acetate or to any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

You must not take Megace as a test to see if you are pregnant.

Do not take Megace after the expiry date printed on the pack.

If you take this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well.

Do not take Megace if the packaging shows signs of tampering.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking Megace, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Before you start to take Megace

You must tell your doctor if:

- * you are or may be pregnant; your doctor will discuss the possible risks and benefits of taking Megace during pregnancy.
- * you are breast feeding; your doctor will discuss the possible risks and benefits of taking Megace during breastfeeding.

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

- * diabetes
- * swelling and clotting in a vein

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start to take Megace.

Taking other medicines

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

How to take Megace

How much to take

Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you how many Megace tablets you will need to take each day. Usually patients with breast cancer take 160mg (four 40mg tablets or one 160mg tablet each day).

How to take Megace

Swallow Megace with a glass of water.

When to take Megace

Take Megace tablets at about the same time each day.

Taking your tablet(s) at the same time each day will have the best effect. It will also help you to remember when to take the tablet(s).

It doesn't matter if you take Megace before or after food.

If you forget to take Megace

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

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

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

How long to take it

Megace is taken continuously (every day) and your doctor will tell you when to stop taking it.

If you take too much (Overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 0800 764 766) or go Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital if you think that you or anyone one else may have taken too much Megace. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

While you are taking Megace

Things you must do

If you become pregnant while taking Megace, tell your doctor immediately.

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

Things you must not do

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

Do not take Megace for any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not stop taking Megace, or lower the dosage, without checking with your doctor or pharmacist.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Megace affects you.

Side Effects

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

Megace will help most people with breast cancer but it may have unwanted side effects in a

few people. All medicines can have side effects, sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not.

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

weight gain (this is a frequent side effect of Megace), nausea, vomiting, and fluid retention. In women

vaginal bleeding may occur while taking, or after stopping taking Megace. These are the more common side effects of Megace.

Shortness of breath, hot flushes, mood changes, unusual hair loss or thinning, rash, pain and/or swelling at the wrists, high blood pressure, high levels of sugar in the blood (hyperglycemia) and moon face appearance may also occur very rarely.

If any of the following happen, tell your doctor immediately, or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital:

Swelling and redness along a vein which is extremely tender when touched; difficulty breathing with swelling of legs or feet due to fluid build up; sudden collapse.

These are very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention.

Some patients have experienced adrenal insufficiency after stopping taking Megace. If this happens you may feel weak, tired, loose weight

and feel a bit dizzy from time to time. If this happens contact your doctor immediately.

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

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

After using Megace

Storage

Keep Megace tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 30 degrees C.

Product description

What Megace looks like

Megace tablets come in two types:

40 mg tablets are white, scored, round tablets, marked with 40, and are in bottles of 100 tablets.

160 mg tables are white, scored, oval tablets, marked with 160, and are in bottles of 30 tablets.

Ingredients

Megace tablets contain:

Active ingredients:

40mg or 160mg megestrol acetate

Inactive ingredients:

acacia, lactose, calcium hydrogen phosphate, maize starch, magnesium stearate, silicon dioxide, microcrystalline cellulose and povidone.

Sponsor Details

Supplied in New Zealand by:

Pharmacy Retailing (NZ) Ltd t/a Healthcare Logistics
58 Richard Pearse Drive
Airport Oaks
Mangere
AUCKLAND

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