

Megestrol acetate

About This Medicine

Megestrol acetate is used to treat cancer. It can also be used to treat symptoms of poor appetite or weight loss in people with cancer and/or other disorders. It is given orally (by mouth).

Possible Side Effects

- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Excess gas
- Impotence (erectile dysfunction)
- Headache
- Rash

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 10% or greater of patients treated with megestrol acetate. All possible side effects are not included. Your side effects may be different depending on your cancer diagnosis, condition, or if you are receiving other medicines in combination. Please discuss any concerns or questions with your medical team.

Warnings and Precautions

- Blood sugar levels may change
- Blood clots and events such as stroke and heart attack, which may be life-threatening. A blood clot in your leg may cause your leg to swell, appear red and warm, and/or cause pain. A blood clot in your lungs may cause trouble breathing, pain when breathing, and/or chest pain.
- Changes in your adrenal gland function

Note: Some of the side effects above are very rare. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.

How to Take Your Medicine

- **For tablets and oral suspension:** Take the medicine as prescribed by your doctor. For oral suspension, shake medicine well before using.
- **Missed dose:** If you vomit or miss a dose, contact your doctor for further instructions. Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

- **Handling:** Wash your hands with soap and water, before and after handling your medicine, your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- Cytotoxic medicines leave the body through urine and stool, but they can also be present in other body fluids such as blood, vomit, semen, and vaginal fluids. Take precautions to prevent others from coming in contact with your medicine or your body fluids. Follow safety precautions during your treatment and for as long as directed by your health care provider after your treatment. If you take a cytotoxic pill each day, follow these precautions every day.
- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the original container at room temperature. Protect from heat.
- **Disposal of unused medicine:** Do not flush any expired and/or unused medicine down the toilet or drain unless you are specifically instructed to do so on the medicine label. Some facilities have take-back programs and/or other options. If you do not have a take-back program in your area, then please discuss with your nurse or your doctor how to dispose of unused medicine.

Treating Side Effects

- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine pale yellow.
- If you have diarrhea, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid). Eat low-fiber foods that are high in protein and calories and avoid foods that can irritate your digestive tracts or lead to cramping.
- Ask your nurse or doctor about medicine that can lessen or stop your diarrhea.
- Avoid gas-producing foods, such as brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, prunes and apricots.
- If you have diabetes, keep good control of your blood sugar level. Tell your nurse or your doctor if your glucose levels are higher or lower than normal.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry. Ask your doctor for medicine if your rash bothers you.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.

Food and Medicine Interactions

- There are no known interactions of megestrol acetate with food.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all other prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) you are taking before starting this medicine as there are known medicine interactions with megestrol acetate. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.
- There are known interactions of megestrol acetate with blood thinning medicine such as warfarin. Ask your doctor what precautions you should take.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:



- Headache that does not go away
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Your leg is swollen, red, warm and/or painful
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing
- Chest pain or symptoms of a heart attack. Most heart attacks involve pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes. The pain may go away and come back. It can feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain. Sometimes pain is felt in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach. **If any of these symptoms last 2 minutes, call 911.**
- Symptoms of a stroke such as sudden numbness or weakness of your face, arm, or leg, mostly on one side of your body; sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding; sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes; sudden trouble walking, feeling dizzy, loss of balance or coordination; or sudden, bad headache with no known cause. **If you have any of these symptoms for 2 minutes, call 911.**
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- Excessive gas or pain in your abdomen that does not go away
- Signs of low adrenal gland function: nausea, vomiting (throwing up), loss of appetite, tiredness, weakness, feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Abnormal blood sugar
- Unusual thirst, passing urine often, headache, sweating, shakiness, irritability
- A new rash and/or itching or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- If you think you may be pregnant

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This medicine may have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** Women should not breastfeed during treatment because this medicine could enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** Fertility studies have not been done with this medicine. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.

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