

Ketoconazole

About This Medicine

Ketoconazole is used to treat fungal infections but is also used to treat prostate cancer in high doses. It is given by mouth (orally).

Possible Side Effects

- Headache
- Nausea
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Pain in your abdomen
- Changes in your liver function

Note: 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

- Severe changes in your liver function, which can cause liver failure and be life-threatening
- Abnormal electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG), which can be life-threatening
- Changes in your adrenal gland function that may affect hormone production
- Decreased testosterone levels that may cause swelling of your breasts and/or impotence (erectile dysfunction)
- Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, are rare but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reaction to this medicine may be swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, do not take another dose of this medicine. You should get urgent medical treatment.**

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

Important Information



- Ketoconazole may cause intolerance to alcohol. Do not drink alcohol while taking ketoconazole.

How to Take Your Medicine

- Swallow the medicine whole as prescribed by your doctor.
- **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.
- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the original container at room temperature. Protect from moisture. 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 throw up or 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.
- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your nurse or doctor about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help stop or lessen these symptoms.
- 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 known interactions of ketoconazole with alcohol.
- This medicine may interact with grapefruit and grapefruit juice. Talk to your doctor as this could make side effects worse.
- 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 ketoconazole. 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.
- Medicines that treat heartburn and stomach upset may lower the effect of your cancer treatment if taken with ketoconazole. Call your doctor to find out what medicine you may take with ketoconazole to help with heartburn or stomach upset.
- Cholesterol-lowering medicines called statins may interact with ketoconazole. Talk to your doctor as this could make side effects, such as muscle problems, worse.
- Sedative medicines, such as triazolam or alprazolam, may interact with ketoconazole. Talk to your doctor as this could enhance the effects of these medicines.
- Avoid the use of alcohol while taking ketoconazole.



- This medicine may interact with St. John's Wort and may lower the levels of the medicine in your body, which can make it less effective.

When to Call the Doctor

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

- A headache that does not go away
- Feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way (palpitations)
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Loss of appetite or unexplained weight loss
- Pain in your abdomen that does not go away
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- Signs of possible liver problems: dark urine, pale bowel movements, pain in your abdomen, feeling very tired and weak, unusual itching, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- Signs of allergic reaction: swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**
- Signs of low adrenal gland function: nausea, vomiting (throwing up), loss of appetite, tiredness, weakness, feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- If you think you may be pregnant

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** It is not known if this medicine may harm an unborn child. For this reason, be sure to talk with your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while receiving this medicine. 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.

Revised August 2023

