

Exemestane

Names	The generic drug name is exemestane (ex-uh-MESS-tane). Aromasin® is a brand name. There may be other brand names for this medication.
How is it Administered?	Exemestane is comes as a tablet. It is usually taken once a day, after you have had a meal.
What is it Used For?	Exemestane is used to treat early stage breast cancer in women who are postmenopausal (have not had a menstrual period for 1 year) and who have already been treated with tamoxifen (Nolvadex®) for 2-3 years. It is also used to treat women whose breast cancer worsened while they were taking tamoxifen.
How does Exemestane Work?	<p>Exemestane is in a class of medications called aromatase inhibitors, a type of hormone therapy. It stops an enzyme (aromatase) from changing hormones made by the adrenal glands (androgens) into the hormone estrogen. In postmenopausal women, this is the primary source of estrogen.</p> <p>When aromatase is blocked, estrogen levels go down. If the breast cancer is a type that grows when estrogen is present, then less estrogen may cause tumor growth to slow or stop.</p>
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have had an allergic reaction to exemestane or if you have any allergies• are taking any herbal products, especially St John's wort• have ever had kidney or liver disease• are pregnant or breastfeeding <p>This drug may interact with other medications or cause harmful side effects. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about <u>all</u> prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, or herbal supplements you take.</p>
What Are Some Possible Side Effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hot flashes and/or sweating• Fatigue• Muscle/joint pain• Hair loss• Sleep problems - difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

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- Nausea (mild)
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Headache

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Wear light, layered clothing; avoid hot or stuffy environments; and try using a handheld fan or a spray (misting) bottle of water.
- Ask your doctor or NP about medications to help with menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes.
- Ask your doctor or NP about medication to help prevent or lessen headache, muscle/joint pain, or nausea.
- Talk with your doctor or NP if you are having problems with anxiety or depression.

When Should I Call the Doctor?

Call your doctor or nurse right immediately if you have:

- any sign of an allergic reaction: itching, rash, hives. Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital ER if you have signs of a severe reaction: Swelling in your face, mouth, throat, or tongue; chest tightness; trouble breathing; dizziness; or heart palpitations (fast or irregular heartbeat)
- chest pain or shortness of breath
- thoughts of harming yourself or others

What Else Should I Know About Exemestane?

- Your bone mineral density (BMD; a measure of the strength of the bones) may decrease while you are taking exemestane. This may increase the chance that you will develop osteoporosis (condition in which the bones are fragile and break easily). Talk to your doctor about the risks of taking exemestane.
- Keep all your doctor and lab appointments. It is very important that your doctor check your progress to make sure the medicine is working properly and to check for unwanted side effects.
- Use this medicine only as directed by your doctor. Do not use more or less of it, and do not use it more often than your doctor ordered.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.
- Store this medicine away from heat, direct light, or moisture.
- If you would like more information about exemestane, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.