



Patient Education

Tamoxifen (ta mox' i fen)

Other Names	Novaldex® (There may be other names for this medication.)
How is Tamoxifen Administered?	Tamoxifen comes as a tablet to take by mouth. Tamoxifen is usually taken once or twice a day with or without food. Take tamoxifen at around the same time(s) every day. Swallow the tablets whole; do not split, chew, or crush them.
Why am I Taking Tamoxifen?	Tamoxifen is used to treat breast cancer that has spread to other parts of the body (metastasized) and early breast cancer in women who have completed surgery and radiation treatments. It is given to women who have had ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) to reduce their risk of getting a more serious type of breast cancer. Tamoxifen reduces the risk of getting breast cancer in the opposite breast. It is also used to reduce the risk of getting breast cancer in women at high risk. It may be prescribed to treat ovarian cancer.
How Does it Work?	<p>Hormones are chemical substances that are produced by glands in the body, which enter the bloodstream and cause effects in other tissues. Some breast cancers are encouraged to grow by the hormone estrogen. (ER-positive cancers)</p> <p>Tamoxifen is an anti-estrogen. It binds to estrogen receptors on the cancer cells and blocks estrogen from entering the cell. This may stop the growth of some breast tumors that need estrogen to grow.</p>