



Temozolomide

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About your treatment

Your doctor has ordered the drug temozolomide to help treat your illness. This medication is used to treat brain tumors (astrocytoma). The drug is taken by mouth in capsule form. Your full dose may contain two or more different strengths of temozolomide capsules. Take your dose at bedtime, with a full glass of water, on an empty stomach. Do not chew or open the capsules. If a capsule opens or breaks, be careful not to get the contents on the skin around your eyes, nose, or mouth. Temozolomide is usually given once daily for 5 days. The treatment may be repeated every 28 days.

This medication is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

Temozolomide is in a class of drugs known as imidazotetrazine derivatives. It slows or stops the growth of cancer cells in your body. The length of treatment depends on how well your body responds to the treatment.

Precautions

Before taking temozolomide,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to temozolomide, dacarbazine, or any other drugs.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, including herbal products and vitamins.
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had kidney or liver disease.
- you should not plan to have children while receiving chemotherapy or for a while after treatments. (Talk to your doctor for further details.) Use a reliable method of birth control to prevent pregnancy. Temozolomide may harm the fetus.
- tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding.
- do not have any vaccinations (e.g., measles or flu shots) without talking to your doctor.
- be aware that temozolomide has been associated with the development of other types of cancer. Talk to your doctor about the potential risk of developing a new cancer.

Side effects

Side effects from temozolomide are common and include:

- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- stomach pain and cramps
- headache
- numbness
- weakness
- tiredness
- back pain
- dizziness
- difficulty walking or coordinating movement
- vision changes
- loss of appetite
- fever
- swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs
- weight gain
- constipation
- discoloration of the skin
- hair loss
- nose bleeds
- fatigue
- confusion
- anxiety
- difficulty falling or staying asleep
- urinary incontinence
- breast pain in women

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- unusual bleeding or bruising
- rash
- itching
- difficulty breathing or swallowing
- seizures
- infection

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/MedWatch/index.html>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

Storage conditions

Keep temozolomide in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

In case of emergency/overdose

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

Brand names

- Temodar®

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