



## Capecitabine

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### **IMPORTANT WARNING:**

When used in combination with anticoagulants ('blood thinners') such as warfarin (Coumadin), capecitabine can cause serious bleeding and death. Tell your doctor if you are taking warfarin or phenprocoumon. Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain lab tests to check your response to capecitabine. If you experience any unusual bleeding or bruising, call your doctor immediately.

### **About your treatment**

Your doctor has ordered the drug capecitabine to help treat your illness. The drug is taken by mouth with tablets. Take capecitabine with water within 30 minutes after eating a meal.

This medication is used to treat:

- metastatic colorectal cancer
- metastatic breast cancer

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

Capecitabine is in a class of drugs known as antimetabolites. Capecitabine resembles a normal cell nutrient needed by cancer cells to grow. The cancer cells take up the capecitabine, which then interferes with their growth. The length of treatment depends on the types of drugs you are taking, how well your body responds to them, and the type of cancer you have.

### **Precautions**

Before taking capecitabine,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to a capecitabine, fluorouracil, or any other drugs.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially those listed in the IMPORTANT WARNING section, antacids, folic acid, leucovorin, phenytoin (Dilantin), and vitamins.
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had heart, liver, or kidney disease.

- women who are pregnant or breast-feeding should tell their doctors before they begin taking this drug. 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.
- tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. Capecitabine can cause serious side effects in nursing infants.
- do not have any vaccinations (e.g., measles or flu shots) without talking to your doctor.

## ***Side effects***

Side effects from capecitabine are common and include:

- diarrhea
- nausea
- vomiting
- stomach pain
- constipation
- weakness
- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- sleeplessness
- dry or itching skin
- dehydration

If you experience any of the following symptoms or the one listed in the IMPORTANT WARNING section, call your doctor immediately:

- severe diarrhea (more than four bowel movements each day or diarrhea at night)
- decreased appetite (complete loss of appetite or only able to eat occasionally)
- severe vomiting (more than one time in a 24-hour period)
- tingling, numbness, pain, redness, or swelling of the hands or feet
- sores or pain in the mouth or throat
- fever or infection (a temperature of 100.5 degrees F or greater)
- chills
- sore throat
- chest pain
- rash

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 capecitabine 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***

- Xeloda®

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