

Medication Information Sheet

pamidronate (pam-ID-droe-nate)

This document provides general information about your medication. It does not replace the advice of your health care professional. Always discuss your therapy with your health care professional and refer to the package insert for more details.

Other Name: Aredia®

Appearance: Clear solution mixed into larger volumes of fluids

What is this medication for?

Pamidronate may:

- Help relieve bone pain and prevent broken bones in cancer that has spread to the bones
- Be used to remove excess calcium from the blood that is a problem with some types of cancer

What should I do before I have this medication?

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you have or had:
 - ◊ kidney, heart, or eye problems,
 - ◊ low calcium or vitamin D levels,
 - ◊ asthma plus an allergy to aspirin (ASA),
 - ◊ take other medications for bone problems,
 - ◊ have sores in your mouth or any dental problems, including wearing dentures,
 - ◊ have any allergies,
 - ◊ or have any planned dental work.

How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- The use of this medication in men or women may cause harm to the unborn baby if pregnancy occurs. Let your health care team know if you or your partner is pregnant, becomes pregnant during treatment, or if you are breastfeeding
- If there is ANY chance that you or your partner may become pregnant, you and your partner together must:
 - ▶ **Use 2 effective forms of birth control at the same time** while taking this drug. Keep using birth control until **6 months** after the last dose. Discuss with your healthcare team.
- Do not breastfeed while on pamidronate treatment.

- This medication may affect fertility (ability to get pregnant)

How is this medication given?

- This drug is given by injection into a vein over 2 to 4 hours.
 - It is usually given at regular intervals in cancer involving the bones, with or without chemotherapy.
 - To remove excess calcium in the blood, pamidronate is usually given for one course.
 - Your doctor may give you extra fluids, to ensure your kidneys can clear excess calcium properly from your body or prevent kidney problems.

What else do I need to know while on this medication?

- Make sure your doctor and pharmacist know about all your medicines (prescription, over-the-counter, herbals and supplements). Check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting or stopping any of them.
- To prevent lowering of your calcium level while using pamidronate, your doctor may tell you to take calcium and vitamin D supplements. Do not take calcium or vitamin D if you have / had high calcium levels in the blood. Talk to your doctor before taking these supplements.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Some of the side effects may be related to chemotherapy, since they have been seen in patients using pamidronate with other chemotherapy drugs.

You may not have all of the side effects below. You may have side effects that are not listed.

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
<p>Nausea and vomiting (generally mild)</p> <p>May occur in hours to days after your treatment.</p> <p>If you have nausea or vomiting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take anti-nausea medication(s) as prescribed to you by your doctor. • Drink clear liquids and have small meals. Get fresh air and rest. • Do not eat spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell. • Limit caffeine (e.g. coffee, tea) and alcohol. • Contact your health care team if the prescribed anti-nausea medications are not helping to control your nausea and vomiting. 	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>

*The most updated version and more symptom control information can be found on: <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/druginfo>
 Prepared with input from the Cancer Care Ontario-Medication Information Sheets Working Group.
 August 2017

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Also see Nausea & Vomiting pamphlet for more information.	
Flu-like symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may have fever, chills and muscle pain without any signs of infection, such as a sore throat, cough or skin rash (in rare cases you may have these side effects due to a viral infection). It may happen at any time after you receive your treatment and it usually goes away as your body gets used to the medication. Contact your health care team if these feelings bother you. Check your temperature to make sure you don't have a fever. If you do not have a fever, you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets to help you feel better. Ask your health care team for the correct dose for you. If you do have a fever, speak to your health care team or go to the nearest emergency room. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Headache; mild joint, muscle pain (may be severe) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take your pain medication as prescribed by your doctor. You can take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets as needed for mild aches and pains. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the right dose for you. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist first before taking ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or aspirin. These medication may increase bleeding risk. Rest often and try light exercise as it may help. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
Cough; feeling short of breath You may have cough and feel short of breath without any signs of infection, such as a sore throat or a stuffed nose. Rarely this may be severe with chest pain, trouble breathing or coughing up blood. If this happens get medical help right away.	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
Low appetite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may not feel like eating or you may lose weight. Try to eat foods that you like and eat small meals throughout the day. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may need to take meal supplements to help keep your weight up. Talk to your health care team if you have a low appetite. See our Loss of appetite pamphlet for more information. 	
<p>Pains or cramps in the belly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have constipation or diarrhea it may be causing the pain in your belly. If the pain is severe, gets worse or doesn't go away, talk to your health care team about other possible causes. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
<p>Heartburn; stomach upset</p> <p>To help prevent heartburn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid fatty or spicy foods. Remain upright after eating. Drink clear liquids and eat small meals. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
<p>Salt imbalances</p> <p>It may cause muscle twitching, severe weakness or cramping, confusion and irregular heartbeat.</p>	Get emergency medical help right away

Other rare, but serious side effects are possible.

If you experience ANY of the following, speak to your cancer health care provider or get emergency medical help right away:

- pain, swelling, numbness or heaviness in your mouth or jaw, poor healing of mouth sores; loosening of teeth
- blurred vision or other changes to your vision
- irregular heartbeat, chest pain, fainting or swelling of your legs
- lower back pain, body swelling, peeing less than usual and having unusual weight gain
- severe or unusual bone pain especially in your back, hips and wrist
- signs of an allergy such as fever, itchiness, rash, swollen lips, face or tongue, chest and throat tightness
- seizure

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For more links on how to manage your symptoms go to www.cancercare.on.ca/symptoms.

The information set out in the medication information sheets, regimen information sheets, and symptom management information (for patients) contained in the Drug Formulary (the "Formulary") is intended to be used by health professionals and patients for informational purposes only. The information is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions or side effects of a certain drug, nor should it be used to indicate that use of a particular drug is safe, appropriate or effective for a given condition.

A patient should always consult a healthcare provider if he/she has any questions regarding the information set out in the Formulary. The information in the Formulary is not intended to act as or replace medical advice and should not be relied upon in any such regard. All uses of the Formulary are subject to clinical judgment and actual prescribing patterns may not follow the information provided in the Formulary.

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