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[Home](#) → [Drugs, Herbs and Supplements](#) → Altretamine

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Altretamine

pronounced as (al tret' a meen)

IMPORTANT WARNING:

Altretamine may cause severe nerve damage. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately: pain, burning, numbness, or tingling in the hands or feet; weakness in the arms or legs; or loss of ability to move your arms or legs; changes in mood; or loss of consciousness.

Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain tests before and during your treatment to check your body's response to altretamine.

Why is this medication prescribed?

Altretamine is used to treat cancer of the ovaries (cancer that begins in the female reproductive organs where eggs are formed) that has not improved or that has worsened after treatment with other medications. Altretamine is a medication that is in a class of medications called antineoplastic agents. It works by slowing or stopping the growth of cancer cells in your body.

How should this medicine be used?

Altretamine comes as a capsule to take by mouth. It is usually taken four times a day (a dose after each meal and a dose at bedtime) for 14 or 21 days in a row. This cycle may be repeated once every 4 weeks depending on your response to the medication. Take altretamine at around the same time every day. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take altretamine exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

Your doctor may adjust your dose of altretamine depending on your response to treatment and any side effects that you experience. Talk to your doctor about how you are feeling during your treatment. Do not stop taking altretamine without talking to your doctor.

Other uses for this medicine

This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking altretamine,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to altretamine, any other medications, or any of the ingredients in altretamine capsules. Ask your pharmacist for a list of the ingredients.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what other prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take. Be sure to mention any of the following: cimetidine (Tagamet), isocarboxazid (Marplan), phenelzine (Nardil), pyridoxine (Vitamin B₆) and tranylcypromine (Parnate). tell your doctor if you have ever received or taken certain chemotherapy medications such as bendamustine (Treanda), cisplatin (Platinol), carmustine (BiCNU, Gliadel Wafer), cyclophosphamide (Cytosan), ifosfamide (Ifex), lomustine (CeeNU), melphalan (Alkeran), procarbazine (Muttalane), temozolomide (Temodar), or thioguanine. Your doctor may need to monitor you carefully for side effects.
- tell your doctor if you have nervous system disorders or blood disorders. Your doctor may tell you not to take altretamine.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You should not become pregnant or breast-feed while you are taking altretamine. If you become pregnant while taking altretamine, call your doctor. Altretamine may harm the fetus.

What special dietary instructions should I follow?

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, continue your normal diet.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Altretamine may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- nausea
- vomiting
- loss of appetite
- unusual tiredness or weakness
- dizziness
- pale skin
- fainting
- skin rash
- itching
- hair loss

Some side effects can be serious. If you experience any of these symptoms or those listed in the IMPORTANT WARNING section, call your doctor immediately or get emergency medical treatment:

- fever, chills, sore throat, ongoing cough and congestion, or other signs of an infection
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- bloody or black, tarry stools
- bloody vomit
- vomited material that looks like coffee grounds
- bleeding gums
- small, round, red or purple colored spots on the skin

Altretamine may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while taking this medication.

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 (<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch> [<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>]) or by phone (1-800-332-1088).

What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?

Keep this medication 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).

Unneeded medications should be disposed of in special ways to ensure that pets, children, and other people cannot consume them. However, you should not flush this medication down the toilet. Instead, the best way to dispose of your medication is through a medicine take-back program. Talk to your pharmacist or contact your local garbage/recycling department to learn about take-back programs in your community. See the FDA's Safe Disposal of Medicines website (<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p> [<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p>]) for more information if you do not have access to a take-back program.

It is important to keep all medication out of sight and reach of children as many containers (such as weekly pill minders and those for eye drops, creams, patches, and inhalers) are not child-resistant and young children can open them easily. To protect young children from poisoning, always lock safety caps and immediately place the medication in a safe location – one that is up and away and out of their sight and reach. <http://www.upandaway.org> [<http://www.upandaway.org>]

In case of emergency/overdose

In case of overdose, call the poison control helpline at 1-800-222-1222. Information is also available online at <https://www.poisonhelp.org/help> [<https://www.poisonhelp.org/help>] . If the victim has collapsed, had a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened, immediately call emergency services at 911.

What other information should I know?

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

Brand names

- Hexalen[®]

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