

## Fosamax (alendronate)

### What is Fosamax ?

- Medication used for:
  - the prevention or treatment of osteoporosis in women after menopause
  - the treatment of osteoporosis in men
  - the treatment of osteoporosis in men or women receiving corticosteroids [for example, prednisone]
- Not a hormone, acts only on bone
- Increases bone mass and reduces the risk of spine and hip fractures

### How would I take Fosamax ?

- Fosamax can be taken at a dose of 10mg/day or 70mg once a week for treatment
- For prevention 5mg/day or 35mg once a week are recommended
- Fosamax plus D is also now available and provides 70mg of Fosamax with 2,800 IU Vit D3 and is given weekly
- After getting up for the day, and before food, drink or other medications, you swallow Fosamax with a 6-8 oz glass of plain water (no other liquid)
- After swallowing the Fosamax, do not lie back down but stay upright (sitting, standing, for walking) for at least 30 minutes
- After swallowing the Fosamax, wait at least 30 minutes before your first food, drink or other medications
- Do not take at bedtime or before getting up for the day

### What if I miss a dose of Fosamax ?

- If you miss a dose, do not take it later in the day.
- If you are on a daily dose, skip the missed dose and take at the usual time the next day
- If you are on a weekly dose, take the missed dose the next morning and resume your regular weekly dose as previously scheduled

### What are the possible side effects of Fosamax ?

- Side effects with Fosamax are not common but may include:
  - Irritation, inflammation or ulcers of the esophagus
  - Heartburn
  - Pain with or difficulty swallowing
  - Abdominal pain at times associated with gastric ulceration
  - Bone, joint or muscle pain - rare
  - Transient flu like symptoms, usually at the start of treatment
  - Localized problem with impaired bone healing in the jaw often following removal of a tooth or with infection - rare. Most cases have been seen in patients with cancer not taking Fosamax but similar drugs IV

### Are there people who should not take Fosamax ?

- Remember your doctor will prescribe this medication for you if the benefits to you are greater than the risk of side effects
- This medication is not recommended:
  - If you have problems with your esophagus [tube that connects your mouth to your stomach]
  - If you cannot sit or stand upright for at least 30 minutes
  - If you have low levels of calcium in your blood
  - If you have severe kidney disease
  - If you are allergic to Fosamax or any of its ingredients
  - If you are pregnant or could become pregnant
  - If you are breast feeding

### *PLEASE REMEMBER:*

This is a summary of key information about Fosamax and does not take the place of discussion with your doctor. Always ask your doctor, pharmacist or health care provider if you have any questions about Fosamax or Osteoporosis

Successful prevention or treatment of Osteoporosis involves more than medication and includes a balanced diet with adequate intake of calcium and Vitamin D, avoidance of cigarette use and daily weight bearing exercise activities



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