

INFORMATION FOR THE PATIENT ABOUT FOSAMAX® Once Weekly

Please read this leaflet carefully before you start to take your medicine even if you have just refilled your prescription. Some of the information in the previous leaflet may have changed. Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medicine only for you. Never give it to anyone else.

How should I take FOSAMAX once weekly?

These are the important things you must do to help make sure you will benefit from FOSAMAX:

1. Choose the day of the week that best fits your schedule. Every week, take one FOSAMAX tablet on your chosen day.
2. After getting up for the day and before taking your first food, beverage, or other medication, swallow your FOSAMAX tablet with a full glass of plain water only.
Not mineral water
Not coffee or tea
Not juice
Do not chew or suck on a tablet of FOSAMAX.
3. After swallowing your FOSAMAX tablet do not lie down - stay fully upright (sitting, standing or walking) for at least 30 minutes and do not lie down until after your first food of the day.
4. Do not take FOSAMAX at bedtime or before getting up for the day.



The above actions will help the FOSAMAX tablet reach your stomach quickly and help reduce the potential for irritation of your esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth with your stomach).

5. **After swallowing your FOSAMAX tablet, wait at least 30 minutes before taking your first food, beverage, or other medication of the day, including antacids, calcium supplements and vitamins. FOSAMAX is effective only if taken when your stomach is empty.**
6. **If you develop difficulty or pain upon swallowing, chest pain, or new or worsening heartburn, stop taking FOSAMAX and call your doctor.**
7. If you miss a dose, just take one FOSAMAX tablet on the morning after you remember. *Do not take two tablets on the same day.* Return to taking one tablet once a week, as originally scheduled on your chosen day.
8. It is important that you take FOSAMAX for as long as your doctor prescribes it. Since it is not known how long you should take FOSAMAX, you should discuss the need to stay on this medication with your doctor periodically to determine if FOSAMAX is still right for you.

You should always tell your doctor about all drugs you are taking or plan to take, including those obtained without a prescription.

What is FOSAMAX?

FOSAMAX (alendronate sodium) is a tablet that contains 70 mg alendronate as the active ingredient.

FOSAMAX is available as a 70 mg tablet for treatment of osteoporosis.

FOSAMAX is a member of a class of non-hormonal drugs called bisphosphonates. FOSAMAX makes bone less likely to fracture.

Why has my doctor prescribed FOSAMAX?

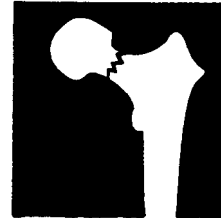
Your doctor has prescribed FOSAMAX to treat a disease you have, known as osteoporosis. This will help prevent you from developing fractures.

<h3><u>How is normal bone maintained?</u></h3>

Bone undergoes a normal process of rebuilding that occurs continuously throughout your skeleton. First, old bone is removed (resorbed), then new bone is laid down (formed). This balanced process of resorbing and forming bone keeps your skeleton healthy and strong.

What is osteoporosis and why should it be treated?

Osteoporosis is a thinning and weakening of the bones. It is common in women after menopause and also may occur in men. Osteoporosis often occurs in women several years after the menopause, which occurs when the ovaries stop producing the female hormone, estrogen, or are removed (which may occur, for example, at the time of a hysterectomy). The earlier a woman reaches the menopause, the greater the risk of osteoporosis. Osteoporosis can also occur in men due to several causes, including aging and/or a low level of the male hormone, testosterone. In all instances bone is removed faster than it is formed, so bone loss occurs and bones become weaker. Therefore, maintaining bone mass and preventing further bone loss are important to keep your skeleton healthy. Early on, osteoporosis usually has no symptoms. If left untreated, however, it can result in fractures (broken bones). Although fractures usually cause pain, fractures of the bones of the spine may go unnoticed until they cause height loss. Fractures may occur during normal, everyday activity, such as lifting, or from minor injury that would not ordinarily fracture normal bone. Fractures usually occur at the hip, spine, or wrist and can lead not only to pain, but also to considerable deformity and disability (such as stooped posture from curvature of the spine, and loss of mobility).



How can osteoporosis be treated?

Your doctor has prescribed FOSAMAX to treat your osteoporosis. FOSAMAX not only prevents the loss of bone but actually makes bone less likely to fracture. Thus, FOSAMAX reverses the progression of osteoporosis.

In addition, your doctor may recommend one or more of the following lifestyle changes:

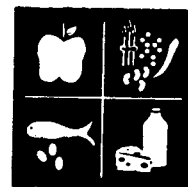
Stop smoking. Smoking appears to increase the rate at which you lose bone and, therefore, may increase your risk of fracture.



Exercise. Like muscles, bones need exercise to stay strong and healthy. Consult your doctor before you begin any exercise program.



Eat a balanced diet. Your doctor can advise you whether to modify your diet or to take any dietary supplements.



Why is it important to continue to take FOSAMAX?

It is important to take FOSAMAX over the long term to continue to prevent loss of bone. It is, therefore, important to follow your doctor's instructions for taking FOSAMAX without skipping doses or varying from your prescribed treatment schedule.

What should I know before taking FOSAMAX?

Who should not take FOSAMAX?

Do not take FOSAMAX if you:

- Have certain disorders of the esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth with your stomach)
- Are unable to stand or sit upright for at least 30 minutes
- Are allergic to any of its ingredients
- Your doctor has told you that you currently have low blood calcium

What should I tell my doctor or pharmacist before taking FOSAMAX?

Tell your doctor or pharmacist about any medical or dental problems you have or have had, including known kidney disease, and about any allergies and if you are or have been a smoker. If you have any swallowing or digestive problems, discuss them with your doctor before taking FOSAMAX.

Use in pregnancy and breast feeding

Do not take FOSAMAX if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

Use in children

FOSAMAX is not indicated for use in children.

Use in elderly

FOSAMAX works equally well in and is equally well tolerated by patients older and younger than 65 years of age.

Can I take FOSAMAX with other medicines?

See "How should I take FOSAMAX once weekly?"

Can I drive or operate machinery while using FOSAMAX?

There have been side effects reported with FOSAMAX that may affect your ability to drive or operate machinery. Individual responses to FOSAMAX may vary. (See **What undesirable effects may FOSAMAX have?**)

What should I do in case of an overdose?

If you take too many tablets, drink a full glass of milk and contact your doctor immediately. Do not induce vomiting. Do not lie down.

What undesirable effects may FOSAMAX have?

Most patients do not have side effects from FOSAMAX; however, as with any medicine, FOSAMAX may have unintended or undesirable effects. Side effects usually have been mild. Some patients may experience digestive disturbances such as nausea, vomiting, or black and/or bloody stools. Some digestive disturbances may be severe including irritation or ulceration of the esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth with your stomach) which can cause chest pain, heartburn or difficulty or pain upon swallowing. These reactions may occur especially if patients do not drink a full glass of water with FOSAMAX and/or if they lie down in less than 30 minutes or before their first food of the day. Esophageal reactions may worsen if patients continue to take FOSAMAX after developing symptoms suggesting irritation of the esophagus.

Some patients may experience bone, muscle and/or joint pain which rarely is severe. Patients who develop severe bone, joint, and/or muscle pain should contact their physician. Most patients experienced relief after stopping the drug. Rarely, patients may also experience joint swelling or swelling in their hands or legs. Transient flu-like symptoms (rarely with fever), typically at the start of treatment, have occurred. In rare cases, patients taking FOSAMAX may get itching or eye pain, ear pain, or a rash that may be made worse by sunlight. Hair loss has been reported. Rarely, severe skin reactions may occur. Allergic reactions such as hives or, rarely, swelling of the face, lips, tongue and/or throat which may cause difficulty in breathing or swallowing may occur. Patients may experience dizziness or a changed sense of taste. Rarely, stomach or other peptic ulcers (some severe) have occurred. Mouth ulcers have occurred when the tablet was chewed or dissolved in the mouth.

Rarely, patients have had jaw problems associated with delayed healing and infection, often following tooth extraction.

Rarely, patients have experienced fracture in a specific part of the thigh bone. Patients have experienced fractures in other bones as well. If you develop new or unusual pain in the hip, thigh or any other bone, contact your doctor.

Your doctor or pharmacist has a more complete list. Tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms.

How can I learn more about FOSAMAX and osteoporosis?

You may obtain further information from your doctor or pharmacist, who have more detailed information about FOSAMAX and osteoporosis.

How long should I keep my medicine?

Do not use this medicine after the month and year shown following EXP on the container. Three letters or two numbers indicate the month; the last four numbers indicate the year.

How should I store FOSAMAX?

Store FOSAMAX below 30°C.

Keep FOSAMAX and all medicines safely away from children.

When was this package leaflet last revised?

This package leaflet was last revised in February 2023.

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