

MEGESTROL

Other NAMES: Megace®

WHY is this drug prescribed?

Megestrol is a drug similar to the hormone progesterone, which occurs naturally in the body. Megestrol can improve appetite and promote weight gain when used together with an appropriate diet.

HOW should this drug be taken?

Megestrol comes as a 20 or 40 mg tablet, or as an oral suspension. It is usually taken once or twice a day. Since each person responds differently to medical treatments, your doctor will recommend the dose and duration of therapy that is best for you.

To improve appetite and increase weight, the usual dose is 400 to 800 mg daily.

Your dosage is:

20 mg tablet

40 mg tablet

____tablet(____mg) ____times a day

or

40 mg/mL oral suspension:

125 mg/mL oral suspension:

____mL (____mg) ____times a day

Megestrol can be taken with or without food. The oral suspension bottle should be well shaken before each dose.

What should you do if you FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose of megestrol, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is time for your next dose, do not double the dose, just carry on with your regular schedule.

What ADVERSE EFFECTS can this drug cause? What should you do about them?

Megestrol may cause the following adverse effects: **anxiety, difficulty concentrating, diarrhea, and flatulence (gas)**. Some people also experience **edema** (swelling of the feet, ankles, and lower legs), **constipation, frequent need to urinate, insomnia, headache, nausea, vomiting and abnormal menstrual bleeding** (spotting).

These effects may go away during treatment as your body adjusts to the drug. However, notify your doctor if any of these effects continue or become bothersome.

Rarely, long-term megestrol use may

cause high blood sugar, impotence, or may affect your adrenal glands.

It is important that you keep your doctor appointments and come for your laboratory tests so that your progress can be followed.

What other PRECAUTIONS should you follow while using this drug?

Before beginning treatment with megestrol, notify your doctor if you have diabetes, glucose intolerance, Cushing's Syndrome or presently have or have had in the past a cancer or blood clots.

Megestrol may interfere with other drugs you are taking. Inform your doctor and pharmacist of all prescribed and non-prescribed drugs you are taking. As well, you should inform them of natural products you are taking. If you wish to start a new drug or natural product, please consult with your pharmacist before doing so.

The use of megestrol is NOT recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Please consult with your doctor if this is a concern. If you are a woman with childbearing potential, you should always use appropriate contraceptive methods (birth control pill, condom) to avoid becoming pregnant while you are taking megestrol. In general, even if you are not taking megestrol, the use of condoms is

always recommended to decrease the risk of passing HIV on to others.

How should this drug be STORED?

Megestrol should be stored in a cool (15 - 30°C) dry place, protected from light and well out of the reach of children. Ensure that the drug has not expired by checking the expiry date (“EXP”) shown on the outside of the package.

Do not store in your bathroom or kitchen, as heat and moisture may cause the drug to be less active.

If you have any questions or concerns about this drug or if you are experiencing adverse effects, please discuss them with your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.

Write questions or concerns down to ensure they are addressed.

The following pharmacist is available to answer questions:

Pharmacist: _____

Telephone: _____

Reference: Product monograph Megace® (megestrol acetate). Montréal, Qc, Canada: Bristol Laboratories of Canada, 2001. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, 2003. Reviewed 2009.

Additional medication fact sheets and updates may be found at: www.hivclinic.ca

MEGESTROL

MEDICATION

FACT SHEET