

## Possible Side Effects (*continued*):

### Headache, Joint or Muscle Pains

#### What to do:

- Talk to your doctor about taking over-the-counter pain medicine.

### Osteoporosis

**What this means:** Women who have gone through menopause and who are taking Anastrozole may have a decrease in their bone mineral density (bone thinning), also called “Osteoporosis”. Bones may become brittle and more prone to fracture.

#### What to do:

- Talk to your doctor about ordering bone density tests.
- Include weight-bearing exercises in your daily routine.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about taking calcium and vitamin D supplements to help strengthen bones.
- Avoid dangerous activities and try to prevent falls.
- Stop smoking.

### Other Side Effects

Call your doctor if you experience a rash, nausea, vomiting, vision changes, chest pain or sudden shortness of breath.

**This is not a complete list of all possible side effects. Tell your doctor if you have these or any other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine. Your JamesCare team will give you further help to manage side effects.**

## PATIENT EDUCATION

# Taking Your Treatment Home

What you need to know about your Anti-Cancer Medicine

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## Anastrozole (Arimidex) for Females

Here is important information on how to use, handle, and store your medicine, what side effects to look for and how to manage them. If you have questions about this medicine, call your doctor at the number below:

Staple business card here or write in doctor's contact information:

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### How to handle and store:

- It is safe to handle Anastrozole as a whole tablet.
- Store in a closed container in a dry place such as a cabinet away from light, heat, and moisture.
- **Do not** store in your bathroom or refrigerator.
- Keep this medicine away from children and do not share it with anyone.

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**How to take:**

- **Do not** take more tablets than prescribed.
- Take the tablet once a day (morning or evening) at the same time everyday. **Do not** stop taking Anastrozole until your doctor tells you to quit.
- Anastrozole can be taken with or without food.
- If you miss a dose by more than 6 hours, wait until it is time for your next dose, and skip the missed dose. **Do not double up on doses.**
- Keep track of what days you take Anastrozole by using a calendar or keeping a diary.

**Disposal:**

- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about how to get rid of prescription medicines safely.

**Precautions:**

- Tell your doctor if you have a history of high cholesterol or heart disease.
- It is unlikely that women who have gone through menopause may have menstrual bleeding or become pregnant.
- **Tell your doctor immediately if you think you have menstrual bleeding or may have become pregnant while taking Anastrozole.**
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist about any medicines you are taking, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal products.

**Possible Side Effects**

You can find more information on side effects in the Patient Education booklet, *Treatment with Chemotherapy and Anti-Cancer Medicines*.

**Hot Flashes**

**What this means:** You may experience episodes of warmth, sweating and flushing (“hot flash”), sometimes followed by a cold chill.

**What to do:**

- Drink at least 8 glasses of water or non-caffeinated fluid each day.
- Exercise daily.
- Wear all-natural fiber clothes in layers.
- Avoid triggers such as warm rooms, spicy foods, smoking or beverages with caffeine or alcohol.
- Talk to your doctor about treatment options if hot flashes interfere with your daily activities.

**Menopause Symptoms/Vaginal Changes**

**What this means:** In addition to hot flashes, you may experience other symptoms of menopause including fatigue, mood changes, depression, discomfort with intercourse and loss of interest in sex. Vaginal changes may include dryness, skin irritation around the vagina and urinary tract infections.

**What to do:**

- Talk openly with your doctor if you have any of these changes.
- Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following:
  - Depressed mood or sadness.
  - Changes in fatigue, sleep or appetite.
  - Changes in or no desire to do things you once enjoyed.

*Continued on back...*