

ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY EDUCATION



FLUTAMIDE

Name of your medication

Generic name — flutamide (FLOO-tuh-mide)
Brand name — none

Approved uses

Flutamide is used to treat prostate cancer.

Dose and schedule

Taking flutamide as instructed is important to allow your treatment to be as effective as possible, so here are some key points to remember.

- Your dose may vary, but the usual dose of flutamide is 250 milligrams (250 mg) to be taken by mouth at scheduled times three times a day (every eight hours).
- Flutamide can be taken with or without food but at the same time each day.
- Flutamide should be taken whole and not crushed, cut, or dissolved. If you are unable to swallow flutamide, talk to your care provider or pharmacist for possible options.
- If you miss a dose of flutamide, **do not** take an extra dose or two doses at one time. Simply take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Be sure to write down if you miss a dose and let your care provider know about any missed doses.

Drug and food interactions

- Flutamide has many drug interactions. Inform your care providers of all prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal products that you are taking.
- Talk with your care provider or pharmacist before taking new medications or supplements, or receiving any vaccines.

Storage and handling

Handle flutamide with care. Just like when chemotherapy is given into the vein, this drug can be toxic, and exposure of the drug to others should be limited.

- Store flutamide at room temperature (68°F–77°F) in a dry location away from light.
- Keep flutamide out of reach of children and pets.
- Leave flutamide in the provided packaging until it is ready to be taken.
- Whenever possible, give flutamide to yourself and follow the steps below. If a family member, friend, or caregiver needs to give flutamide to you, they also need to follow these steps:
 1. Wash hands with soap and water.
 2. Put on gloves to avoid touching the medication. (Gloves are not necessary if you give the drug to yourself.)
 3. Gently transfer the flutamide from its package to a small medicine or other disposable cup.
 4. Administer the medicine immediately by mouth with water.

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5. Remove gloves and do not use them for anything else.
 6. Throw gloves and medicine cup in household trash.
 7. Wash hands with soap and water.
- If a daily pill box or pill reminder will be used, contact your care team before using:
 - The person filling the box or reminder should wear gloves (gloves are not necessary if you are filling the box or reminder).
 - When empty, the box or reminder should be washed with soap and water before refilling. Be sure to wash hands with soap and water after the task is complete, whether or not gloves are worn.
 - If you have any unused flutamide, **do not** throw it in the trash and **do not** flush it down the sink or toilet. Talk to your care provider or pharmacist about proper disposal of flutamide.
 - If you are traveling, put your flutamide's packaging in a sealed plastic bag. Ask your pharmacist if any additional travel precautions are needed.

Side Effects of Flutamide

Below are common side effects that have been known to happen in about one third or more of patients taking flutamide are listed on the left side of this table. You **MAY NOT** experience these side effects. Options to help manage any side effects that do occur are included on the right side of this table. These should be discussed with your care provider. If you experience any side effect you cannot manage or that is not listed here, contact your care provider.

Possible Side Effect	Management
Hot flashes (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth)	<p>If hot flashes are bothersome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a regular exercise program. Even mild exercise may help. • Try staying in a cool environment. • Wear layers so that you can remove outer layers when experiencing a hot flash. • Avoid or limit caffeine, spicy food, alcohol, and stress, which may worsen hot flashes. <p>Inform your care provider if your hot flashes are bothersome as there may be medications that can help.</p>
Decreased sex drive and/or impotence	Talk to your care provider about available options.

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Possible Side Effect	Management
Diarrhea (loose and/or urgent bowel movements)	<p>Monitor how many bowel movements you have each day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink 8–10 glasses of water or fluid each day unless your care provider has instructed you to limit your fluid intake related to some other health problem.• Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day rather than a few large meals.• Eat bland, low-fiber foods (e.g., bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, toast).• Avoid high-fiber foods, such as raw vegetables, raw fruits, and whole grains.• Avoid foods that cause gas, such as broccoli and beans.• Avoid lactose-containing foods, such as yogurt and milk.• Avoid spicy, fried, and greasy foods. <p>Contact your provider if any of the following occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of bowel movements you have in a day increases by four or more• You feel dizzy or lightheaded. <p>Your care provider may recommend an over-the-counter medication called loperamide (Imodium®) to help with your diarrhea, but talk to your care provider before starting this medication.</p>

Serious side effects of flutamide

- Flutamide can increase levels of aniline, which can cause toxicity in patients with glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency, hemoglobin M disease and smokers. Let your healthcare provider know if you are in one of these high risk groups.
- Flutamide can cause gynecomastia (enlarged breasts in men). Let your healthcare provider know if you experience this.
- Your healthcare provider will monitor prostate specific antigen (PSA) while you are on therapy.
- Flutamide can interact with warfarin, a blood thinner. If you are on warfarin, you may need blood tests more frequently.

If you experience ANY uncontrolled side effect, call your physician or healthcare center immediately:

(INSTITUTIONAL CONTACT INFO)

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Handling body fluids and waste

Flutamide remains in your body for several days after it is taken, so some of the drug may be present in urine, stool, sweat, or vomit. Once you have started to take flutamide, it is important to follow the instructions below every day for as long as your treatment lasts. This will keep yourself, loved ones, and the environment as safe as possible.

- Pregnant women should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- Toilet and septic systems
 - You may use the same toilet, septic tank, and/or sewer that you usually use. If you have a low-flow toilet, close the lid and flush twice to ensure all waste has been discarded.
 - If the toilet or toilet seat becomes soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet.
 - Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet.
- If you need a bedpan, be sure your caregiver knows to wear gloves to assist with cleanup and to wash the bedpan with soap and water every day.
- If you do not have good control of bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb body waste.
- Wash any skin that has been exposed to body waste or flutamide with soap and water.
- Linens or clothing that are soiled with body fluids or body waste should be washed separately from other linens and clothing. If you do not have a washer, place the soiled linens in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- Wash hands with soap and water after touching linens or clothing that may be soiled with body fluids.

Pregnancy, sexual activity, and contraception

- Women should not become pregnant and men should not get a partner pregnant while taking flutamide. Men and women of childbearing age and potential should use effective contraception during therapy and for a minimum of one month after the last dose of flutamide.
- Effective contraception could include one or more of the following: oral contraceptive, barrier methods, etc.
- Inform your care provider if you become pregnant.
- It is safe to hug and kiss. Special precautions may be needed for sexual activity while on flutamide, and you are encouraged to ask your care provider.

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Obtaining medication

Talk with your care provider about how to obtain your flutamide.

_____ (PHARMACY OR SPECIALTY PHARMACY CONTACT INFO)

Additional resources

Product prescribing information: <https://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/drugInfo.cfm?setid=d037fb0c-881f-43d2-8693-aa1342d0130a>

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Additional instructions

Important notice: The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), National Community Oncology Dispensing Association, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources. This guide does not cover all existing information related to the possible uses, directions, doses, precautions, warnings, interactions, adverse effects, or risks associated with this medication and should not substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Provision of this guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of this medication by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. The collaborators are not making any representations with respect to the medications whatsoever, and any and all decisions, with respect to such medications, are at the sole risk of the individual consuming the medication. All decisions related to taking this medication should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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