



NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West

Tamoxifen

Trade names: Novaldex®

How this drug is given:

- Tamoxifen is a pill, given by mouth. The pill should be swallowed whole.
- Tamoxifen should be taken at about the same time each day with a full glass of water. If you miss a dose, do not take a double dose the next day.

Side effects:

Important things to remember about the side effects of tamoxifen:

- Most people do not experience all of the side effects listed.
- Side effects are almost always reversible and will usually go away after treatment is complete.
- There are many options to help minimize or prevent side effects.

The following side effects are common for patients receiving tamoxifen:

- Hot flashes
- Vaginal discharge
- Swelling (fluid retention in feet, ankles, or hands)
- Loss of libido (particularly in men)

These are less common side effects for patients receiving tamoxifen:

- Nausea
- Menstrual irregularities
- Vaginal bleeding
- Weight loss
- Mood changes (see anxiety and/or depression)

A **rare, but serious** side effect of tamoxifen is blood clots, including deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolus.

A **rare, but serious** side effect of tamoxifen can be the development of uterine cancer. Women who have not had a hysterectomy should have regular pap smears and gynecologic examinations. Abnormal vaginal bleeding should be reported to your health care provider.

Your fertility, meaning your ability to conceive or father a child, may be affected by tamoxifen. Please discuss this issue with your health care provider.

When to contact your doctor or health care provider:

Seek emergency help ***immediately*** and notify your health care provider, if you experience the following symptoms:

- Sudden shortness of breath and/or chest pain

The following symptoms require medical attention, but are not an emergency. Contact your health care provider ***within 24 hours*** of noticing any of the following:

- Swelling, redness and/or pain in one leg or arm and not the other
- New breast lumps
- Excessive vaginal discharge or bleeding, menstrual (period) pain or irregularities
- Nausea (interferes with ability to eat and unrelieved with prescribed medication)
- Depression (interfering with your ability to carry on your regular activities)
- Changes in vision

Always inform your health care provider if you experience any unusual symptoms.