



Altretamine

Other Names: (Hexalen®)

About This Drug

Altretamine is used to treat cancer. It is given orally (by mouth)

Possible Side Effects

- Decrease in red blood cells (you may feel more tired)
- Nausea and throwing up (vomiting)
- Effects on the nerves are called peripheral neuropathy. You may feel numbness, tingling, or pain in your hands and feet. It may be hard for you to button your clothes, open jars, or walk as usual. The effect on the nerves may get worse with more doses of the drug. These effects get better in some people after the drug is stopped but it does not get better in all people.

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 20% or greater of patients treated with altretamine. Not all possible side effects are included above.

Warnings and Precautions

- Decrease in the number of white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This may raise your risk of infection, make you tired and weak (fatigue), and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Changes in your central nervous system can happen. The central nervous system is made up of your brain and spinal cord. You could feel extreme tiredness, agitation, confusion, hallucinations (see or hear things that are not there), trouble understanding or speaking, loss of control of your bowels or bladder, eyesight changes, numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body, and coma. If you start to have any of these symptoms let your doctor know right away.
- Severe low blood pressure could result if you take a type of antidepressant called a monoamine oxidase inhibitor. Please discuss with your doctor if you are taking an antidepressant.

How to Take Your Medication

- Swallow your medicine whole, divided in four doses after meals and at bedtime.
- **Missed dose:** If you vomit or miss a dose, take your next dose at the regular time. Do not take 2 doses at the same time
- **Handling:** Wash your hands after handling your medicine, your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- This drug may be present in the saliva, tears, sweat, urine, stool, vomit, semen, and vaginal secretions. Talk to your doctor and/or your nurse about the necessary precautions to take during this time.
- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the original container at room temperature. Discuss with your nurse or your doctor how to dispose of unused medicine.

Treating Side Effects

- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- If you throw up or have loose bowel movements, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack water in the body from losing too much fluid).
- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your nurse or doctor about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help or stop lessen these symptoms.
- If you have numbness and tingling in your hands and feet, be careful when cooking, walking, and handling sharp objects and hot liquids.

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of altretamine with food.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all other prescription medicines and dietary supplements you are taking before starting this medicine as there are a lot of known drug interactions with altretamine. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplement to make sure that there are no interactions.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.5 F (38 C) or higher
- Chills
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines

- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Numbness, tingling, or pain your hands and feety
- Fatigue that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheadedy
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Confusion and/or agitation
- Hallucinations
- Trouble understanding or speaking
- Blurry vision or changes in your eyesight
- Numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body
- If you think you are pregnant or if you may have impregnated your partner

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This drug can have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of child bearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant.
- **Lactation warning:** It is not known if this drug passes into breast milk. For this reason, women should talk to their doctor about the risks and benefits of breast feeding during treatment with this drug because this drug may enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breast feeding baby.

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