



For the Patient: Bicalutamide
Other names: CASODEX®

BC Cancer Agency

- ***Bicalutamide*** (bye-ka-LOO-ta-mide) is a drug that is used to treat prostate cancer. It blocks the effect of testosterone which is a male sex hormone. Bicalutamide is often used with another drug that lowers testosterone levels in the body. It is a tablet that you take by mouth. The tablet contains lactose.
- It is important to ***take*** bicalutamide exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions. Bicalutamide may be taken with food or on an empty stomach with a glass of water or juice.
- If you ***miss a dose*** of bicalutamide, take it as soon as you can if it is within 12 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 12 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- ***Store*** bicalutamide tablets out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light and moisture.
- Other drugs such as warfarin (COUMADIN®) may ***interact*** with bicalutamide. Tell your doctor if you are taking this or any other drugs as you may need extra blood tests or your dose may need to be changed. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.
- The ***drinking of alcohol*** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of bicalutamide.
- Bicalutamide may ***lower sperm counts*** after you have taken it for a long time. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before taking bicalutamide.
- ***Tell*** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with bicalutamide before you receive any treatment from them.

Side effects are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur when bicalutamide is used with another drug that lowers testosterone level. Tips to help manage the side effects are included.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur with bicalutamide. This should go away as treatment continues. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>To help nausea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Control Nausea</i>.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Hot flashes (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth) can sometimes occur when you first start taking bicalutamide. This usually improves as your body adjusts to bicalutamide. Hot flashes are more common when bicalutamide is taken with another drug that lowers testosterone levels.</p>	<p>If hot flashes are troublesome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your bicalutamide at bedtime. • If night sweats interfere with sleep, try taking your bicalutamide in the morning.
<p>Impotence (loss of sexual ability) may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will return to normal when you stop taking bicalutamide.
<p>Breast swelling or soreness may occur, especially when bicalutamide is used alone. Breast swelling or soreness is rare when bicalutamide is taken with another drug that lowers testosterone levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will return to normal when you stop taking bicalutamide.
<p>Constipation or diarrhea may occur.</p>	<p>To help constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day). • Try ideas in <i>Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation</i>. <p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Coping with Diarrhea</i> • Note: If lactose in milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the tablet may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® just before your bicalutamide dose.
<p>Sugar control may be affected in diabetics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
<p>Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in <i>Your bank of energy savings: How people with cancer can handle fatigue</i>.
<p>Hair loss is rare with bicalutamide. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with bicalutamide. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush. • Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.

