

Capecitabine Pharmacare 500mg film-coated tablets

Capecitabine 500mg

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet:

1. What Capecitabine Pharmacare is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you take Capecitabine Pharmacare
3. How to take Capecitabine Pharmacare
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Capecitabine Pharmacare
6. Contents of the pack and other information

1. What Capecitabine Pharmacare is and what it is used for

Capecitabine Pharmacare belongs to a group of medicines called "cytostatic medicines", which stop the growth of cancer cells. Capecitabine Pharmacare 500 mg contains 500 mg of capecitabine, which is not a cytostatic agent in itself. Only after having been absorbed by the body is it changed into an active anti-cancer medicine (more in tumour tissue than in normal tissue).

Capecitabine Pharmacare is prescribed by doctors for the treatment of colon, rectal, gastric or breast cancers. Capecitabine Pharmacare may also be prescribed by doctors to prevent recurrence of colon cancer after complete surgical removal of the tumour. Capecitabine Pharmacare may be used either alone or in combination with other medicines.

2. What you need to know before you take Capecitabine Pharmacare

Do not take Capecitabine Pharmacare:

- If you are allergic to capecitabine or any other ingredient of this medicine (indicated in section 6). You must inform your doctor if you know that you have an allergy or over-reaction to this medicine;
- If you previously have had severe reactions to fluoropyrimidine therapy (a group of anticancer medicines such as fluorouracil);
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding;
- If you have severely low levels of white cells or platelets in the blood (leucopenia, neutropenia or thrombocytopenia)
- If you have severe liver or kidney problems;
- If you know that you do not have any activity of the enzyme dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) (complete DPD deficiency);
- If you are being treated now or have been treated in the last 4 weeks with brivudine, as part of herpes zoster (chickenpox or shingles) therapy.

Warnings and precautions

Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking Capecitabine Pharmacare:

- If you have liver or kidney diseases
- If you have or had heart problems (for example irregular heartbeat or chest, jaw and back pains caused by physical effort and due to problems with the blood flow to the heart)
- If you have brain diseases (e.g. cancer that has spread to the brain or nerve damage (neuropathy))
- If you have calcium imbalances (observed in blood tests)
- If you have diarrhoea
- If you have diabetes
- If you cannot keep food or water in your body because of severe nausea and vomiting
- If you are or become dehydrated
- If you have imbalances of ions in your blood (electrolyte imbalances, observed in tests)
- If you have a history of eye problems you may need extra monitoring of your eyes
- If you have a severe skin reaction.
- If you know that you have a partial deficiency in the activity of the enzyme dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD)
- If you have a family member who has partial or complete deficiency of the enzyme dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD)

DPD deficiency: DPD deficiency is a genetic condition that is not usually associated with health problems unless you receive certain medicines. If you have DPD deficiency and take Capecitabine Pharmacare, you are at an increased risk of severe side effects (listed under section 4 Possible side effects). It is recommended to test you for DPD deficiency before start of treatment. If you have no activity of the enzyme you should not take Capecitabine Pharmacare. If you have a reduced enzyme activity (partial deficiency) your doctor might prescribe a reduce dose. If you have negative test results for DPD deficiency, severe and life-threatening side effects may still occur).

Children and adolescents

Capecitabine Pharmacare is not indicated in children and adolescents.

Do not give Capecitabine Pharmacare to children and adolescents.

Other medicines and Capecitabine Pharmacare

Before starting treatment, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking or have recently taken or might take any other medicines. This is extremely important, as taking more than one medicine at the same time can strengthen or weaken the effect of the medicines.

You must not take brivudine (an anti-viral medicine for the treatment of shingles or chickenpox) at the same time as capecitabine treatment (including during any rest periods when you are not taking any capecitabine tablets). If you have taken brivudine you must wait for at least 4 weeks after stopping brivudine before starting to take capecitabine. See also section "Do not take Capecitabine Pharmacare".

Also, you need to be particularly careful if you are taking any of the following:

- Blood-thinning medicines (coumarin, warfarin)
- Medicines for seizures or tremors (phenytoin)
- Interferon alpha
- Radiotherapy and certain medicines used to treat cancer (folic acid, oxaliplatin, bevacizumab, cisplatin, irinotecan)
- Medicines used to treat folic acid deficiency.
- Gout medicines (allopurinol)

Capecitabine Pharmacare with food and drink

You should take Capecitabine Pharmacare no later than 30 minutes after meals.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine. You must not take Capecitabine Pharmacare if you are pregnant or think you might be.

You must not breast-feed if you are taking Capecitabine Pharmacare.

Driving and use of machinery

Capecitabine Pharmacare may make you feel dizzy, nauseous or tired. It is therefore possible that Capecitabine Pharmacare could affect your ability to drive or to operate machinery.

Capecitabine Pharmacare contains anhydrous lactose.

If you have been informed by your doctor that you have intolerance to some sugars, contact your doctor before taking this medicine.

3. How to take Capecitabine Pharmacare

Take this medicine exactly as indicated by your doctor or pharmacist. Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions.

Capecitabine Pharmacare can only be prescribed by a doctor experienced in the use of antineoplastic medicines.

Your doctor will prescribe a dose and treatment regimen that is right for your case. The dose of Capecitabine Pharmacare is based on the body surface area, which is calculated from the patient's weight and height.

The usual dose for adults is 1250 mg/m² of body surface area, taken twice daily (morning and evening). Two examples are described below: A patient weighing 64 kg and whose height is 1.64m has a body surface area of 1.7m² and should take 4 tablets of 500mg and 1 tablet of 150mg twice daily. A patient weighing 80 kg and whose height is 1.80 m has a body surface area of 2m² and should take 5 tablets of 500mg twice daily.

Capecitabine Pharmacare tablets are usually taken for 14 days followed by a 7-day rest period (when no tablets are taken).

This 21-day period constitutes one treatment cycle.

In combination with other medicines the usual dose for adults may be less than 1250 mg/m² of body surface area, and you may need to take the tablets over a different time period (e.g. every day, with no rest period).

Your doctor will tell you what dose you need to take, when to take it and for how long you need to take it.

Your doctor may want you to take a combination of 150 mg and 500 mg tablets for each dose.

- Take the tablets in the **morning and evening**, as prescribed by your doctor.
- Take the tablets within **30 minutes after the end of a meal** (breakfast and dinner) **and swallow whole with water.**
- You must take the medicine exactly as prescribed by your doctor.

If you take more Capecitabine Pharmacare than you should, contact your doctor as soon as possible before taking the next dose.

You might get the following side effects if you take a lot more Capecitabine than you should: feeling of being sick, diarrhoea, inflammation or ulceration of the guttor mouth, pain or bleeding from the intestine or stomach, or bone marrow depression (reduction in certain kinds of blood cells). Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of these symptoms.

If you forgot to take Capecitabine Pharmacare

Do not take the missed dose and do not double the next one. Instead, continue your regular dosing schedule and check with your doctor.

If you stop taking Capecitabine Pharmacare:

There are no side effects caused by stopping treatment with Capecitabine Pharmacare. If you are taking coumarin anticoagulants (containing phenprocoumon for instance), stopping Capecitabine Pharmacare therapy might mean that your doctor has to adjust your anticoagulant dose. If you have questions on the use of this medicine, consult your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Like any medicine, this medicine may cause side effects, although not all people experience them.

STOP taking Capecitabine Pharmacare immediately and contact your doctor if any of these symptoms occur:

- **Diarrhoea:** an increase of 4 or more bowel movements, compared to your normal bowel movements each day, or any diarrhoea at night.
- **Vomiting:** more than once in a 24-hour period.
- **Nausea:** lose appetite, and the amount of food eaten each day is much less than usual.
- If severe stomatitis (sores in your mouth and/or throat), mucosal inflammation, diarrhoea, neutropenia (increased risk for infections), or neurotoxicity occurs during the first cycle of treatment a DPD deficiency may be involved (please see Section 2: Warning and precautions).
- **Hand-and-foot skin-reaction:** pain, swelling, redness or tingling of hands and/or feet.
- **Fever:** a temperature of 38°C or higher.
- **Infection:** signs of infection caused by bacteria or virus or other organisms.
- **Chest pain:** pain localized in the centre of the chest, especially if it occurs during exercise.
- **Steven-Johnson syndrome:** painful red or purplish rash that spreads and blisters and/or other lesions begin to appear in the mucous membrane (e.g. mouth and lips), in particular if you had before light sensitivity, infections of the respiratory system (e.g. bronchitis) and/or fever.
- **DPD Deficiency:** if you have a known DPD deficiency, you are at an increased risk of acute early-onset of toxicity and severe, life-threatening, or fatal adverse reactions caused by Capecitabine Pharmacare (e.g. stomatitis, mucosal inflammation, diarrhoea, neutropenia, and neurotoxicity).
- **Angioedema:** Seek medical attention straight away if you notice any of the following symptoms - you may need urgent medical treatment: swelling mainly of the face, lips, tongue or throat which makes it difficult to swallow or breathe, itching and rashes. This could be a sign of angioedema.

If identified at an early stage, these side effects usually improve within 2 to 3 days after discontinuation of treatment.

If these side effects continue, however, contact your doctor immediately. Your doctor may instruct you to resume treatment at a lower dose.

Hand-and-foot skin-reaction can lead to loss of fingerprint, which could impact your identification by fingerprint scan.

In addition to the above, when Capecitabine Pharmacare is used alone, very common side effects, which may affect more than 1 person in 10 are:

- Abdominal pain
- Rash or dry or itchy skin
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite (anorexia)

These side effects can become serious. Therefore, you must **always contact your doctor immediately** when you start to experience a side effect. Your doctor may instruct you to decrease the dose and/or temporarily discontinue treatment with Capecitabine Pharmacare. This will help reduce the likelihood that the side effect continues or becomes serious. If you are concerned by these or other unexpected effects consult your doctor.

Other side effects are:

Common side effects (may affect up to 1 person out of 10) include:

- Decrease in the number of white blood cells or red blood cells (observed in tests)
- Headache, sleepiness, dizziness, abnormal sensation in the skin (numbness or tingling sensation), taste changes
- Eye irritation, increased tears, eye redness (conjunctivitis)
- Inflammation of the veins (thrombophlebitis)
- Shortness of breath, nose bleed, cough, runny nose
- Cold sores or other herpes infections
- Infections of the lungs or respiratory system (e.g. pneumonia or bronchitis)
- Dehydration, weight loss
- Intestinal bleeding, constipation, pain in upper abdomen, indigestion, excess wind, dry mouth
- Skin rash, hair loss (alopecia), skin reddening, dry skin, itching (pruritus), skin discoloration, skin loss, skin inflammation, nail disorder
- Pain in the joints or in the limbs (extremities), chest or back
- Fever, swelling in the limbs, feeling ill
- Liver function problems (observed in blood tests) and increased blood bilirubin (excreted by the liver)
- Sleeplessness (insomnia), depression

Uncommon side effects (may affect up to 1 person out of 100) include:

- Blood infection, urinary tract infection, skin infection, nose and throat infections, fungal infections (including in the mouth), influenza, gastroenteritis, tooth abscess
- Lumps under the skin (lipoma)
- Decreases in blood cells, including platelets,
- Blood clots in the veins in the lung (pulmonary embolism), collapsed lung, coughing up blood, asthma, shortness of breath on exertion
- Bowel obstruction, collection of fluid in the abdomen, inflammation of the small or large intestine, the stomach or the esophagus, pain in the lower abdomen,

- thinning of blood (observed in tests)
- Allergy
- Diabetes, decrease in blood potassium, malnutrition, increased blood triglycerides
- Difficulty speaking, impaired memory, loss of movement coordination, balance disorder, fainting, nerve damage (neuropathy) and sensitivity problems
- Blurred or double vision
- Vertigo, ear pain
- Irregular heartbeat and palpitations (arrhythmias), chest pain and heart attack (infarction)
- Blood clots in the deep veins, high or low blood pressure, hot flushes, cold limbs (extremities), purple spots on the skin
- Swelling (edema), chills and rigors

- abdominal discomfort, heartburn (reflux of food from the stomach), blood in the stool
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin & eyes)
- Skin ulcers and blisters, skin reaction in sunlight, reddening of palms, face swelling or pain
- Joint swelling or stiffness, bone pain, muscle weakness or stiffness
- Fluid collection in the kidneys, increased frequency of urination at night, incontinence, blood in the urine, increase in blood creatinine (sign of kidney dysfunction)
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding
- State of confusion, panic attacks, depression, decreased libido

Some of these side effects are more common when capecitabine is used with other medicines for the treatment of cancer. Other side effects observed in this context are:

Common side effects (may affect up to 1 person out of 10) include:

- Decrease in blood sodium, magnesium or calcium, increase in blood sugar
- Ringing or buzzing in the ears (tinnitus), hearing loss
- Inflammation of the veins
- Hiccups, change in voice
- Pain or altered/abnormal sensation in the mouth, pain in the jaw
- Sweating, night sweats
- Muscle spasm
- Difficulty in urinating, blood or protein in the urine
- Bruising or reaction at the injection site (caused by medicines given by injection at the same time)
- Nerve pain

Rare side effects (may affect up to 1 person out of 1,000) include:

- Inflammation leading to dysfunction or obstruction in bile secretion (cholestatic hepatitis)
- Specific EKG changes (QT prolongation)
- Skin inflammation causing red scaly patches due to an immune system illness
- Liver failure
- Certain types of arrhythmia (including ventricular fibrillation, torsade de pointes, and bradycardia)
- Eye inflammation causing eye pain and possible eyesight problems
- Narrowing or blockage of tear duct (lacrimal duct stenosis)
- Angioedema (swelling mainly of the face, lip, tongue or throat, itching and rashes)

Very rare side effects (may affect up to 1 person out of 10,000) include:

Severe skin reaction such as skin rash, ulceration and blistering which may involve ulcers of the mouth, nose, genitalia, hands, feet and eyes (red and swollen eyes)

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the national reporting system. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

5. How to store Capecitabine Pharmacare

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children. Do not store this medicine above 30°C.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton after EXP. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Do not throw any medicines in the drains or in the household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away the medicines that you are no longer using. These measures will help protect the environment.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What Capecitabine Pharmacare contains

The active substance is capecitabine.

Capecitabine Pharmacare 500 mg film-coated tablets: Each film-coated tablet contains 500 mg of capecitabine.

The other ingredients are: Tablet core: anhydrous lactose, croscarmellose sodium, hypromellose, microcrystalline cellulose, magnesium stearate. Tablet coating: hypromellose, titanium dioxide (E171), talc, yellow and red iron oxide (E172).

What Capecitabine Pharmacare looks like and contents of the pack

Capecitabine Pharmacare 500 mg film-coated tablets

Peach coloured, oblong shaped, biconvex, film coated tablet, debossed with '500' on one side & plain on the other side.

Capecitabine Pharmacare is available in the following packages:

Alu-Alu or PVC/PVDC-Alu blisters containing 60 or 120 tablets.

Not all the package sizes may be marketed.

Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturer

Pharmacare Premium Limited
HHF 003 Hal Far Industrial Estate
Birzebbugia BBG 3000, Malta

Pharmacare Premium Ltd.
HHF003 Hal Far Industrial Estate, Birzebbugia BBG3000, Malta

