

Capecitabine

Names	The generic drug name is capecitabine (ka-pe-SITE-a-been). Xeloda® is the brand name. There may be other names for this medication.
Taking Capecitabine	Capecitabine comes as a pill, to be taken by mouth. Take with a meal or within 30 minutes after eating a meal. Do not crush, chew, or dissolve the tablets. Swallow with water. Do not use antacids for 2 hours after taking capecitabine.
How Does Capecitabine Work?	<p>Cancer is a group of diseases in which abnormal cells reproduce without control. Normal and cancer cells go through cycles – phases of resting, growing, and division (reproduction). Your drug therapy schedule is based upon the characteristics of your cancer and how your drug(s) works.</p> <p>Capecitabine is in a class of drugs known as antimetabolites, drugs that interrupt the cell cycle. It is biologically similar to substances found inside cells. The cancer cells take in the capecitabine and it disrupts their growth and reproduction. If the cells can't reproduce, they die.</p> <p>The faster cells are dividing, the more likely it is that chemotherapy will damage or kill them. Unfortunately, normal cells that reproduce quickly are also affected. These normal cells will eventually grow back and be healthy. During treatment, however, you may experience side effects.</p> <p>Capecitabine is used to treat metastatic breast, colon, and rectal cancers.</p>
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin Capecitabine?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have had an allergic reaction to capecitabine or 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) or have any allergies• take warfarin (Coumadin®/Jantoven®) or any anticoagulant medicines• have kidney, liver, or heart disease• are pregnant or breastfeeding• have been told you have a DPD enzyme deficiency <p>This drug may interact with other medications. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about <u>all</u> prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal or diet supplements that you are taking.</p>

What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

More common

- Low red blood cell count (increased risk of anemia and fatigue)
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Hand-and-foot syndrome: swelling, redness, pain, or numbness in the palms of your hands or soles of your feet.
- Dry, itching skin and/or rash

Less common

- Low white blood cells (increased risk of infection) and/or low platelets (increased risk of bleeding)
- Mouth and/or throat soreness
- Excessive water loss (dehydration)
- Decreased appetite, constipation, and/or abdominal pain
- Headache, sleeplessness (insomnia), and/or dizziness
- Numbness and tingling in hands, arms, feet, or legs (peripheral neuropathy)

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Eat well and stay out of bed as much as possible and be as physically active as possible to help fight fatigue.
- Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent or lessen nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Try eating smaller meals, more frequently, to help with nausea.
- Drink 2-3 quarts/day, unless your doctor tells you differently. It will help you avoid dehydration and constipation.
- Use a mild emollient such as Lubriderm® or udder cream to keep the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet moist.
- Do not put anything on a rash unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry.
- To help prevent infections, stay away from people with a cold or flu. Talk to your doctor before you have any vaccinations. Wash your hands thoroughly, and often.
- To help prevent bleeding, be careful when handling sharp objects. Stay away from situations where you may be injured. Use an electric razor. Be careful when using a toothbrush or dental floss.
- Check with your doctor before you use enemas, laxatives, or suppositories to relieve constipation.
- Mouth care is very important. Rinse your mouth with a mixture of ½ teaspoon of baking soda in 8 ounces of water after every meal and at

bedtime. Brush your teeth and gums often with a soft toothbrush.
(Soften it further by running it under warm water before brushing.)

- Avoid smoking, alcohol, and mouthwashes that contain alcohol.

When Should I
Call the
Doctor?

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

- any sign of infection: **fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher**, chills, cough, sore throat, pain or burning upon urination; redness or tenderness along a vein, at an IV site, or at any other wound or skin irritation
- any sign of an allergic reaction: itching, hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing, dizziness, or palpitations
- unusual bruising or bleeding: bleeding for more than 10-15 minutes or that causes dizziness; black or bloody stools; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in urine, mucus, or vomit;

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- no bowel movement for 3 days, more than 4 bowel movements in a day, diarrhea at night. or blood in your bowel movements
- nausea/vomiting not relieved by prescribed medication
- difficulty walking, or clumsiness in doing routine activities
- persistent loss of appetite or have lost more than 5 pounds in 1 week
- extreme fatigue or weakness that interferes with normal activities
- numbness, tingling, decreased sensation, swelling, pain, redness, scaling, or blistering on the hands or feet

What Else
Should I Know
About
Capecitabine?

- Do not get pregnant or father a child while taking this medication. Both men and women should use barrier methods of contraception (condoms/diaphragms). This drug may harm an unborn child.
- Do not take more medicine than your doctor tells you to.
- Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain lab tests to check your response to capecitabine.
- This medicine is usually given every day for 14 days, followed by no medicine for 7 days. Your doctor may want you to repeat this cycle. At each dose you may need to take 2 capecitabine tablets that are different colors and have different numbers imprinted on them. Make sure you do not take the wrong tablet at the wrong time of day.
- For more information about capecitabine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.