

[Home](#)

2. Alendronate

Alendronate

Generic name: alendronate [*a-LEN-dro-nate*]**Brand names:** [Binosto](#), [Fosamax](#)**Dosage forms:** oral solution (70 mg/75 mL), oral tablet (10 mg; 35 mg; 5 mg; 70 mg), oral tablet, effervescent (70 mg)**Drug class:** [Bisphosphonates](#)[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Aug 3, 2023. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).[Uses](#) [Side effects](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Interactions](#)

What is alendronate?

Alendronate is used to treat [osteoporosis](#) caused by [menopause](#), steroid use, or gonadal failure. alendronate is for use when you have a high risk of [bone fracture](#) due to osteoporosis.

Alendronate is also used to treat [Paget's disease](#) of bone.

Alendronate may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Alendronate side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction:** hives; [wheezing](#), difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Alendronate may cause serious side effects. Stop using alendronate and call your doctor at once if you have:

- chest pain, new or worsening [heartburn](#);
- difficulty or pain when swallowing;
- pain or burning under the ribs or in the back;
- severe heartburn, burning pain in your upper stomach, or coughing up blood;
- new or unusual pain in your thigh or hip;
- jaw pain, numbness, or swelling;
- severe joint, bone, or [muscle pain](#); or
- **low calcium levels**--muscle spasms or contractions, numbness or tingly feeling (around your mouth, or in your fingers and toes).

Common side effects of alendronate may include:

- heartburn, [upset stomach](#);
- stomach pain, nausea;
- diarrhea, [constipation](#); or
- bone pain, muscle or [joint pain](#).

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Alendronate side effects](#) (more detail)

Related/similar drugs

Prolia

Prolia (denosumab) is an injection that is administered subcutaneously (under the skin) once every ...

Reviews & ratings

2.9 / 10

[374 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Fosamax

Fosamax (alendronate) is used to treat or prevent postmenopausal osteoporosis and steroid-induced ...

Reviews & ratings

2.8 / 10

[76 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

FEATURED

Omvox

Omvox is used to treat moderate to severe ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease in adults. This ...

Reviews & ratings

[1 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Premarin

Premarin is used to treat symptoms of menopause such as hot flashes, and vaginal dryness. Learn ...

Reviews & ratings

7.7 / 10

[84 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Reclast

Reclast (zoledronic acid) is used to treat osteoporosis in women after menopause and also to treat ...

Reviews & ratings

5.1 / 10

[275 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Estrace

Estrace (estradiol) is used to treat symptoms of menopause such as hot flashes and vaginal dryness ...

Reviews & ratings

7.3 / 10

[12 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Zometa

Zometa is used to treat high blood levels of calcium caused by cancer and multiple myeloma. Learn ...

Reviews & ratings

4.8 / 10

[43 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Denosumab

Denosumab (Prolia, Conexence, Jubbonti, Ospomyv, and Stoboclo brands/biosimilars) is used to treat ...

Reviews & ratings

3.0 / 10

[396 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Warnings

You should not take alendronate if you have problems with your esophagus, or low levels of calcium in your blood.

Do not take alendronate if you cannot sit upright or stand for at least 30 minutes after taking the medicine.

Alendronate can cause serious problems in the stomach or esophagus. **Stop using alendronate and call your doctor at once if you have chest pain, new or worsening heartburn, or pain when swallowing.**

Also call your doctor if you have muscle spasms, numbness or tingling (in hands and feet or around the mouth), new or unusual hip pain, or severe pain in your joints, bones, or muscles.

Before taking this medicine

You should not take alendronate if you are allergic to it, or if you have:

- low levels of calcium in your blood ([hypocalcemia](#)); or
- problems with the muscles in your esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth and stomach).

Do not take alendronate if you cannot sit upright or stand for at least 30 minutes. Alendronate can cause serious problems in the stomach or esophagus. You must stay upright for at least 30 minutes after taking alendronate.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- trouble swallowing;
- problems with your stomach or digestion;
- hypocalcemia;
- a dental problem (you may need a dental exam before you begin taking alendronate);
- kidney disease; or
- any condition that makes it hard for your body to absorb nutrients from food (malabsorption).

The effervescent tablet contains a lot of sodium. Tell your doctor if you are on a low-salt diet before using this form of alendronate.

This medicine may cause jaw bone problems (osteonecrosis). The risk is highest in people with cancer, blood cell disorders, pre-existing dental problems, or people treated with steroids, chemotherapy, or radiation. Ask your doctor about your own risk.

It is not known whether this medicine will harm an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. **Stop using the medicine and tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant.**

It may not be safe to breastfeed while using this medicine. Ask your doctor about any risk.

How should I take alendronate?

Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Use the medicine exactly as directed.

Alendronate is taken either once daily or once per week. **Follow your doctor's dosing instructions very carefully.**

Take alendronate first thing in the morning, **at least 30 minutes before you eat or drink anything or take any other medicine.** If you take alendronate only once per week, take it on the same day each week and always first thing in the morning.

Take with a full glass (6 to 8 ounces) of plain water. Do not use coffee, tea, soda, juice, or mineral water. Do not eat or drink anything other than plain water.

Measure **liquid medicine** carefully. Use the dosing syringe provided, or use a medicine dose-measuring device (not a kitchen spoon).

Do not crush, chew, or suck on an alendronate **regular tablet**. Swallow it whole.

Dissolve the **effervescent tablet** in at least 4 ounces of water (at room temperature, not hot or cold). Let the tablet dissolve for 5 minutes. Stir this mixture for 10 seconds and drink all of it right away. Add a little more water to the glass, swirl gently and drink right away.

For at least 30 minutes after taking alendronate:

- **Do not lie down or recline.**
- **Do not take any other medicine** including vitamins, calcium, or antacids.

Pay special attention to your dental hygiene while taking alendronate. Brush and floss your teeth regularly. **If you need to have any dental work (especially surgery),** tell the dentist ahead of time that you are using alendronate.

Alendronate is only part of a complete program of treatment that may also include diet changes, exercise, bone mineral density testing, and taking calcium and vitamin supplements. Follow your doctor's instructions very closely.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep unused effervescent tablets in the foil blister pack.

Your doctor will determine how long to treat you with this medicine. Alendronate is often given for only 3 to 5 years.

 [Detailed Alendronate dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Once-daily dosing: If you forget to take alendronate first thing in the morning, do not take it later in the day. Wait until the following morning and skip the missed dose. **Do not** take two (2) doses in one day.

Once-per-week dosing: If you forget to take alendronate on your scheduled day, take it first thing in the morning on the day after you remember the missed dose. Then return to your regular weekly schedule on your chosen dose day. **Do not** take 2 doses in one day.

What happens if I overdose?

Drink a full glass of milk and seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **Do not make yourself vomit and do not lie down.**

What should I avoid while taking alendronate?

Avoid taking any other medicines for at least 30 minutes after taking alendronate. This includes vitamins, calcium, and antacids. Some medicines can make it harder for your body to absorb alendronate.

Avoid smoking, or try to quit. Smoking can reduce your bone mineral density, making fractures more likely.

Avoid drinking large amounts of alcohol. Heavy drinking can also cause bone loss.

What other drugs will affect alendronate?

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially:

- aspirin; or
- **NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)**--[ibuprofen](#) (Advil, Motrin), [naproxen](#) (Aleve), [celecoxib](#), [diclofenac](#), [indomethacin](#), [meloxicam](#), and others.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may affect alendronate, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and [herbal products](#). Not all possible [drug interactions](#) are listed here.

 [Alendronate drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does alendronate interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

+

Add

More about alendronate

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(185\)](#)
- [Drug images](#)
- [Side effects](#)

- [Dosage information](#)
- [Patient tips](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Support group](#)
- [Drug class: bisphosphonates](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)
- [En español](#)

Patient resources

Other brands

[Fosamax](#), [Binosto](#)

Professional resources

- [Alendronate monograph](#)
- [Alendronate \(FDA\)](#)
- [Alendronate Oral Solution \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

[Fosamax](#), [Binosto](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Osteoporosis](#)
- [Prevention of Osteoporosis](#)
- [Paget's Disease](#)
- [Aseptic Necrosis](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.


[Medical Disclaimer](#)

Copyright 1996-2025 Cerner Multum, Inc. Version: 17.01.

Availability

Rx Prescription only


Pregnancy & Lactation

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug

Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

2.8 / 10

[185 Reviews](#)

Images

[Alendronate Sodium 70 mg \(F 21\)](#)



[View larger images](#)

Drugs.com Mobile App

Access drug & treatment information, identify pills, check interactions and set up personal medication records.



About

[About Drugs.com](#)

[Advertising policy](#)

[Attribution & citations](#)

Terms & privacy

[Terms of use](#)

[Editorial policy](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

Support

[Help center](#)

[Sitemap](#)

[Contact us](#)





[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for the latest medication news, new drug approvals and FDA alerts.

Drugs.com provides accurate and independent information on more than 24,000 prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines and natural products. This material is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Data sources include Micromedex (updated 7 Apr 2025), Cerner Multum™ (updated 13 Apr 2025), ASHP (updated 10 Apr 2025) and others.



Ad Choices
ADVERTISEMENT



Copyright © 2000-2025 Drugs.com. All rights reserved.