

In this session, we will be discussing the consumer medication information for pantoprazole, trade name Protonix™.

What it's for & How to take

Pantoprazole decreases the amount of acid produced in your stomach. Pantoprazole is used to treat a severe form of heartburn known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (also known as GERD), stomach ulcers, and other conditions that involve an increased stomach acid.

Pantoprazole may help decrease symptoms such as heartburn, a persistent cough related to stomach acid, or a constant burning in your stomach.

Pantoprazole is usually taken once daily in the morning, with or without food. If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of your next dose, skip it and continue with your normal dose time. Do not take a double dose to make up the missed dose.

Pantoprazole should offer some relief from your symptoms the first day you take it. It may take up to a week for the full effect to be noticed. If you do not notice any relief within 7 days, call your doctor.

Continue taking this medication even after your symptoms have gone away. Pantoprazole is decreasing the acid and giving your stomach some time to heal.

Usually, your doctor will have you take this medication for 4-8 weeks. Ask your doctor how long they want you to take this medication and when they want to see you again. Sometimes your doctor may have you take this medication for a longer period of time.

Warnings & Cautions

- There is an increased risk of bone fracture if you take this medication for 12 months or longer. If you continue to take this medication, talk with your doctor about vitamin D and calcium therapy as well as regularly checking your bone status.
- Long-term use of this medication may lower your magnesium levels. This may happen after only 3 months but most likely after 12 months or more of treatment. Ask your doctor to check your magnesium level. Low magnesium levels can cause abnormal heart rhythm, shakiness, and seizures.
- The elderly may be at an increased risk for bone fractures while taking this medication. Discuss with your doctor or pharmacist how you may help prevent a bone fracture or bone loss by taking calcium and vitamin D.
- Let your pharmacist or doctor know if you are pregnant or breastfeeding before taking this medication.

Interactions & Side Effects

- Tell your pharmacist or doctor all your medication allergies so they may determine if pantoprazole is safe for you to take.
- Avoid dangerous drug interactions. Some medications need specific stomach acid to be absorbed, and this medication changes the acid level. Tell your pharmacist or doctor all the other medication you are taking, including over the counter supplements, even if you don't take them very often.
- Ask your doctor if this medication is safe to take with your current health conditions. Tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney disease, high blood pressure or a heart condition, diabetes, or any other existing physical condition.
- While taking pantoprazole, you may feel a headache, some diarrhea and maybe a dry mouth. If these or any other unwanted side effects persist, contact your doctor or pharmacist to talk about it with them.
- Call your doctor right away if you feel a severe cough or choking, abnormal heartbeat, muscle tightening, spasms, or seizures.
- Call emergency 911 if you have any symptoms of a heart attack such as chest and left arm pain, shortness of breath and sweating or if you have symptoms of a stroke such as weakness on one side of your body, slurred

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Pantoprazole (Protonix™)

speech, sudden vision changes, and confusion.

If you have any questions about what you have heard, contact your pharmacist or doctor. This session does not include all the potential interactions or side effects that this medication may cause. Ask your pharmacist how your medication should be stored and how you should dispose of it when you are done taking it. Do not share your medication with anyone, ever. Remember, this is not meant to replace your counseling session with your pharmacist. In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222.

Updated 10/16

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