

One-Alpha[®] (Alfacalcidol) and Hemodialysis

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What is One-Alpha[®] (alfacalcidol)?

- One-Alpha[®] is a medication with the active ingredient alfacalcidol. This is a form of vitamin D. The liver changes alfacalcidol to calcitriol, which is a form of vitamin D that can be used by the body.
- Alfacalcidol helps your body control your calcium and phosphate levels. Calcium and phosphate are needed to build healthy bone.
- It comes as a capsule (pill) or as a liquid.
 - › With capsules, you will take a 0.25 mcg or 1 mcg dose (amount). With liquid, you will take a 2 mcg/ml dose.

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

Why does someone on hemodialysis need this medication?

- People get vitamin D from sunlight, and from eating oily fish and milk products. People with kidney disease cannot change enough vitamin D into calcitriol.
- This can cause:
 - › low calcium levels in the blood.
 - › weaker bones.
- One-Alpha® raises the amount of vitamin D in your body that can be used.

How do I take One-Alpha®?

- Take this medication exactly as your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) tells you.
- **Do not** stop taking One-Alpha® before talking with your primary health care provider.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you can. **Do not double the dose if it is almost time for your next dose.**

- This medication can:
 - › be taken with water.
 - › be swallowed without chewing.
 - › be taken with or without food.

If your stomach feels upset after taking this medication, try taking it with food.

Are there any side effects?

- **Common side effects are:**
 - › Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
 - › Headaches
- **Less common side effects are:**
 - › Constipation (not being able to poop)
 - › Vomiting (throwing up)
 - › Loss of appetite
 - › Peeing more than usual
 - › Drowsiness (feeling tired or sleepy)
 - › Dry mouth
 - › Muscle or bone pain
 - › Irregular heartbeat
 - › Red eyes

How do I store this medication?

- Store capsules:
 - › at room temperature (15 to 25 °C).
 - › away from moisture and light. A bathroom medicine cabinet is a good place.
 - › out of reach of children and pets.
- Store liquid:
 - › on a low shelf in the fridge (between 2 to 8 °C).
 - › away from sunlight.
 - › out of reach of children and pets.

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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