
MEMANTINE ER/DONEPEZIL (Namzaric) Fact Sheet

Bottom Line:

Namzaric combines donepezil and memantine in a single capsule. It is helpful for patients who are already on this combination regimen but who have trouble taking two pills.

FDA Indications:

Moderate to severe Alzheimer's dementia.

Off-Label Uses:

Mild to moderate Alzheimer's dementia; other memory disorders; mild cognitive impairment.

Dosage Forms:

Capsules: 7 mg/10 mg, 14 mg/10 mg, 21 mg/10 mg, 28 mg/10 mg memantine ER and donepezil.

Dosage Guidance:

- Patients should first be stabilized on the individual medications; patients on memantine (10 mg BID or 28 mg XR QD) and donepezil 10 mg QD can be switched to Namzaric 28 mg/10 mg QPM.
- Patients with severe renal impairment on memantine 5 mg BID or 14 mg XR QD and donepezil 10 mg QD can be switched to Namzaric 14 mg/10 mg QPM.

Monitoring: No routine monitoring recommended unless clinical picture warrants.

Cost: \$\$\$\$

Side Effects:

- Most common: Headache, diarrhea, dizziness, vomiting, weight loss, anorexia, insomnia, abnormal dreams.
- Serious but rare: Cholinesterase inhibitors may have vagotonic effects that may cause bradycardia and/or heart block with or without a history of cardiac disease; syncope reported.

Mechanism, Pharmacokinetics, and Drug Interactions:

- N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptor antagonist and acetylcholinesterase (AChE) inhibitor.
- Metabolism: Memantine hepatic but not CYP450, and donepezil primarily through CYP2D6 and CYP3A4; $t_{1/2}$: 60–80 hours (memantine) and 70 hours (donepezil).
- Avoid use with anticholinergic agents as they will diminish therapeutic effects; avoid beta blockers due to risk of bradycardia. CYP450 interactions not usually clinically important.

Clinical Pearls:

- Many experts now stabilize patients on an AChE inhibitor like donepezil and then add memantine.
- The manufacturer recommends bedtime dosing, but taking it in the morning may prevent the insomnia and vivid dreams some patients report with donepezil.
- Once-a-day dosing makes this agent easiest to use.
- Be mindful of other medications that may have intrinsic anticholinergic activity; these will counteract donepezil's therapeutic effects.

Fun Fact:

In 2014, Actavis Pharmaceuticals acquired Forest Pharmaceuticals, manufacturer of Namzaric. That same year, Actavis also acquired Allergan, manufacturer of Botox, another medication targeting the aging process but in a different way.