

Package leaflet: Information for the patient
Nexazole 20 mg hard gastro-resistant capsules
Nexazole 40 mg hard gastro-resistant capsules
esomeprazole

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects talk to your doctor or pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet:

1. What Nexazole is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you take Nexazole
3. How to take Nexazole
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Nexazole
6. Contents of the pack and other information

1. What Nexazole is and what it is used for

Nexazole contains a medicine called esomeprazole. This belongs to a group of medicines called "proton pump inhibitors". They work by reducing the amount of acid that your stomach produces.

Nexazole is used for:

- Adults**
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease* (GERD). This is where acid from the stomach escapes into the gullet (the tube which connects your throat to your stomach) causing pain, inflammation and heartburn. This medicine is given to:
 - heal your gullet if it has become damaged or inflamed
 - stop these conditions coming back
 - give you relief from the unpleasant symptoms that often occur with these conditions
 - Ulcers in the stomach or upper part of the gut (intestine) that are infected with bacteria called "*Helicobacter pylori*". If you have this condition, your doctor may also prescribe this medicine in combination with certain antibiotics to:
 - heal duodenal ulcers associated with bacteria *Helicobacter pylori*
 - prevent the recurrence of ulcers associated with this bacteria
 - Stomach ulcers caused by medicines called NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs). This medicine is given to:
 - heal ulcers in your stomach caused by NSAIDs
 - stop stomach and duodenal ulcers from forming if you are taking NSAIDs
 - Prolonged treatment after prevention of rebleeding of ulcers with intravenous esomeprazole.
 - Too much acid in the stomach caused by a growth in the pancreas (Zollinger-Ellison syndrome).

Adolescents aged 12 years and above

- Gastroesophageal reflux disease* (GERD). This is where acid from the stomach escapes into the gullet (the tube which connects your throat to your stomach) causing pain, inflammation and heartburn.
- Ulcers in the stomach or upper part of the gut (intestine) that are infected with bacteria called "*Helicobacter pylori*". If you have this condition, your doctor may also prescribe antibiotics to treat the infection and allow the ulcer to heal.

2. What you need to know before you take Nexazole

Do not take Nexazole

- If you are allergic to esomeprazole or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in Section 6).
 - If you are allergic to other proton pump inhibitor medicines (e.g. pantoprazole, lansoprazole, rabeprazole, omeprazole).
 - If you are taking a medicine containing nelfinavir (used to treat HIV).
- Do not take Nexazole if any of the above apply to you. If you are not sure, talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking Nexazole.

Warnings and Precautions

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking Nexazole if:
- You have severe liver problems.
 - You have severe kidney problems.
 - You have vitamin B12 deficiency.
 - You have ever had a skin reaction after treatment with a medicine similar to nexazole that reduces stomach acid.
 - You are due to have a specific blood test (Chromogranin A).

If you get a rash on your skin, especially in areas exposed to the sun, tell your doctor as soon as you can, as you may need to stop your treatment with Nexazole. Remember to also mention any other ill-effects like pain in your joints.

Nexazole may hide the symptoms of other diseases. **Therefore, if any of the following happen to you before you start taking Nexazole or while you are taking them, talk to your doctor straight away:**

- You lose a lot of weight for no reason and have problems swallowing.
- You get stomach pain or indigestion.
- You begin to vomit food or blood.
- You pass black stools (blood-stained faeces).

If you have been prescribed Nexazole "on demand" you should contact your doctor if your symptoms continue or change in character.

Taking a proton pump inhibitor like Nexazole, especially over a period of more than one year, may slightly increase your risk of fracture in the hip, wrist or spine. Tell your doctor if you have osteoporosis or if you are taking corticosteroids (which can increase the risk of osteoporosis).

Other medicines and Nexazole

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken, or might take any other medicines. This is because Nexazole can affect the way some medicines work and some medicines can have an effect on Nexazole.

Do not take Nexazole if you are taking the following medicine:

- Nelfinavir (used to treat HIV infection).
- Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any of the following medicines:
- Atazanavir (used to treat HIV infection).
 - Ketoconazole, itraconazole or voriconazole (used to treat infections caused by a fungus).
 - Digoxin (used to treat heart problems).
 - Eriofolin (used to treat cancer).
 - Citalopram, imipramine or clomipramine (used to treat depression).
 - Diazepam (used to treat anxiety, relax muscles or in epilepsy).
 - Phenytoin (used in epilepsy). If you are taking phenytoin, your doctor will need to monitor you when you start or stop taking Nexazole.
 - Medicines that are used to thin your blood, such as warfarin. Your doctor may need to monitor you when you start or stop taking Nexazole.
 - Clistazol (used to treat intermittent claudication - a pain in your legs when you walk which is caused by an insufficient blood supply).
 - Cisapride (used for indigestion and heartburn).
 - Methotrexate (a chemotherapy medicine used in high doses to treat cancer) - if you are taking a high dose of methotrexate, your doctor may temporarily stop your Nexazole treatment.
 - Clopidogrel (used to prevent blood clots (thrombi)).
 - Tacrolimus (organ transplantation).
 - Rifampicin (to treat tuberculosis).
 - St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) (used to treat depression).

If your doctor has prescribed the antibiotics amoxicillin and clarithromycin as well as Nexazole to treat ulcers caused by *Helicobacter pylori* infection, it is very important that you tell your doctor about any other medicines you are taking.

Taking Nexazole with food and drink

You can take your capsules with food or on an empty stomach.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine. Your doctor will decide whether you can take Nexazole during this time. It is not known if Nexazole passes into breast milk. Therefore, you should not take Nexazole if you are breast-feeding.

Driving and using machines

Nexazole is not likely to affect you being able to drive or use any tools or machines. However side effects such as dizziness and blurred vision may uncommonly or rarely occur (see section 4). If affected, you should not drive or use machines.

Nexazole contains sucrose and sodium

If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to some sugars, contact your doctor before taking this medicinal product.
This medicine contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per capsule, that is to say essentially "sodium-free".

3. How to take Nexazole

- Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If you are taking this medicine for a long time, your doctor will want to monitor you (particularly if you are taking it for more than a year).
 - If your doctor has told you to take this medicine as and when you need it, tell your doctor if your symptoms change.

How much to take

Your doctor will tell you how many capsules to take and how long to take them for. This will depend on your condition, how old you are and how well your liver works.

- The recommended doses are given below.

Adults aged 18 and above

To treat heartburn caused by gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD):

- If your doctor has found that your food pipe (gullet) has been slightly damaged, the recommended dose is one Nexazole 40 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day for 4 weeks. Your doctor may tell you to take the same dose for a further 4 weeks if your gullet has not yet healed.
- The recommended dose once the gullet has healed is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day.
- If your gullet has not been damaged, the recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule each day. Once the condition has been controlled, your doctor may tell you to take your medicine as and when you need it, up to a maximum of one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule each day.
- If you have severe liver problems, your doctor may give you a lower dose.

To treat ulcers caused by *Helicobacter pylori* infection and to stop them coming back:

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule twice a day for one week.
- Your doctor will also tell you to take antibiotics for example amoxicillin and clarithromycin.

To treat stomach ulcers caused by NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs):

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day for 4 to 8 weeks.

To prevent stomach ulcers if you are taking NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs):

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day.

To be used as prolonged treatment after prevention of rebleeding of ulcers with intravenous esomeprazole:

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 40 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day for 4 weeks.

To treat too much acid in the stomach caused by a growth in the pancreas (Zollinger-Ellison syndrome):

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 40 mg gastro-resistant capsule twice a day.
- Your doctor will adjust the dose depending on your needs and will also decide how long you need to take the medicine for. The maximum dose is 80 mg twice a day.

Adolescents aged 12 or above

To treat heartburn caused by gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD):

- If your doctor has found that your food pipe (gullet) has been slightly damaged, the recommended dose is one Nexazole 40 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day for 4 weeks. Your doctor may tell you to take the same dose for a further 4 weeks if your gullet has not yet healed.
- The recommended dose once the gullet has healed is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule once a day.
- If your gullet has not been damaged, the recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule each day.
- If you have severe liver problems, your doctor may give you a lower dose.

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To treat ulcers caused by *Helicobacter pylori* infection and to stop them coming back:

- The recommended dose is one Nexazole 20 mg gastro-resistant capsule twice a day for one week.
- Your doctor will also tell you to take antibiotics for example amoxicillin and clarithromycin.

Taking this medicine

- You can take your capsules at any time of the day.
- You can take your capsules with food or on an empty stomach.
- Swallow your capsules whole with a drink of water. Do not chew or crush the capsules. This is because the capsules contain coated pellets which stop the medicine from being broken down by the acid in your stomach. It is important not to damage the pellets.

What to do if you have trouble swallowing the capsules

- If you have trouble swallowing the capsules:
 - Open the capsule and empty the pellets into half a glass of still (non-fizzy) water. Do not use any other liquids.
 - Then drink the mixture straight away or within 30 minutes. Always stir the mixture just before drinking it.
 - To make sure that you have drunk all of the medicine, rinse the glass very well with half a glass of water and drink it. The solid pieces contain the medicine - do not chew or crush them.
- If you cannot swallow at all, the pellets can be mixed with some water and put into a syringe. They can then be given to you through a tube directly into your stomach ("gastric tube").

Children under the age of 12 years

Nexazole is not recommended for children less than 12 years old.

Elderly

Dose adjustment is not required in the elderly.

If you take more Nexazole than you should

If you take more Nexazole than prescribed by your doctor, talk to your doctor or pharmacist straight away.

If you forget to take Nexazole

- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose.
- Do not take a double dose (two doses at the same time) to make up for a forgotten dose.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

If you notice any of the following serious side effects, stop taking Nexazole and contact a doctor immediately:

- Sudden wheezing, swelling of your lips, tongue and throat or body, rash, fainting or difficulties to swallow (severe allergic reaction).
- Reddening of the skin with blisters or peeling. There may also be severe blisters and bleeding in the lips, eyes, mouth, nose and genitals. This could be "Stevens-Johnson syndrome" or "toxic epidermal necrolysis".
- Yellow skin, dark urine and tiredness which can be symptoms of liver problems.

These effects are rare, affecting less than 1 in 1,000 people.

Other side effects include:

- Common** (may affect up to 1 in 10 people)
- Headache.
 - Effects on your stomach or gut: diarrhoea, stomach pain, constipation, wind (flatulence).
 - Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting).
 - Benign polyps in the stomach.

Uncommon (may affect up to 1 in 100 people)

- Swelling of the feet and ankles.
- Disturbed sleep (insomnia).
- Dizziness, tingling feelings such as "pins and needles", feeling sleepy.
- Spinning feeling (vertigo).
- Dry mouth.
- Changes in blood tests that check how the liver is working.
- Skin rash, lumpy rash (hives) and itchy skin.
- Fracture of the hip, wrist or spine (if Nexazole is used in high doses and over long duration).

Rare (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people)

- Blood problems such as a reduced number of white cells (leukopenia) or platelets (thrombocytopenia). This can cause weakness, bruising or make infections more likely.
- Low levels of sodium in the blood. This may cause weakness, being sick (vomiting) and cramps.
- Feeling agitated, confused or depressed.
- Taste changes.
- Eyesight problems such as blurred vision.
- Suddenly feeling wheezy or short of breath (bronchospasm).
- An inflammation of the inside of the mouth.
- An infection called "thrush" which can affect the gut and is caused by a fungus.
- Liver problems, including jaundice which can cause yellow skin, dark urine, and tiredness.
- Hair loss (alopecia).
- Skin rash on exposure to sunshine.
- Joint pains (arthralgia) or muscle pains (myalgia).
- Generally feeling unwell and lacking energy.
- Increased sweating.

Very rare (may affect up to 1 in 10,000 people)

- Changes in blood count including lack of white blood cells (agranulocytosis) and a reduction in the number of red and white blood cells, as well as platelets (pancytopenia).
 - Aggression.
 - Seeing, feeling or hearing things that are not there (hallucinations).
 - Severe liver problems leading to liver failure and inflammation of the brain.
 - Sudden onset of a severe rash or blistering or peeling skin. This may be associated with a high fever and joint pains (Erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis).
 - Muscle weakness.
 - Severe kidney problems.
 - Enlarged breasts in men.
- Not known** (frequency cannot be estimated from the available data)
- If you are on Nexazole for more than three months it is possible that the levels of magnesium in your blood may fall. Low levels of magnesium can be seen as fatigue, involuntary muscle contractions, disorientation, convulsions, dizziness and disturbed heart rate. If you get any of these symptoms, please tell your doctor promptly. Low levels of magnesium can also lead to a reduction in potassium or calcium levels in the blood. Your doctor may decide to perform regular blood tests to monitor your levels of magnesium.
 - Inflammation in the gut (leading to diarrhoea).
 - Rash, possibly with pain in the joints.

Nexazole may in very rare cases affect the white blood cells leading to immune deficiency. If you have an infection with symptoms such as fever with a severely reduced general condition or fever with symptoms of a local infection such as pain in the neck, throat or mouth or difficulties in urinating, you must consult your doctor as soon as possible so that a lack of white blood cells (agranulocytosis) can be ruled out by a blood test. It is important for you to get information about your medication at this time.

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the HPRa pharmacovigilance Website: www.hpra.ie. By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

5. How to store Nexazole

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children. Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the packaging. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Blister pack consisting of OPA/Alu/PE + DES film/Alu+ PE foil

Store in the original package in order to protect from moisture.

Blister pack consisting of OPA/Alu/PVC/Alu foil

Do not store above 30°C.

Store in the original package in order to protect from moisture.

HDPE tablet container

Keep the container tightly closed in order to protect from moisture.

Do not throw away any medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use. These measures will help protect the environment.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What Nexazole contains

- The active substance is esomeprazole. Each hard gastro-resistant capsule contains 20 mg or 40 mg esomeprazole (as magnesium dihydrate).
- The other ingredients are sucrose, maize starch, povidone K30, sodium laurilsulfate, poly (vinyl alcohol), titanium dioxide (E171), macrogol 3000, macrogol 6000, talc, heavy magnesium carbonate, methacrylic acid - ethyl acrylate copolymer (1:1), dispersion 30%, and polysorbate 80 in pellets in the capsule core and gelatine, titanium dioxide (E171) and red iron oxide (E172) in the capsule shell. See section 2 'Nexazole contains sucrose and sodium'.

What Nexazole looks like and contents of the pack

The body and cap of the 20 mg hard gastro-resistant capsules are slightly pink. The capsules contain white to almost white pellets.
The body and cap of the 40 mg hard gastro-resistant capsules are off-pink. The capsules contain white to almost white pellets.
The capsules are available in boxes of 7, 14, 15, 28, 30, 50, 56, 60, 90, 98 and 100 capsules in blister packs and in plastic tablet containers of 98 capsules. Do not eat the desiccant capsule provided in the container. Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

Marketing Authorisation Holder

Pinewood Laboratories Ltd., Ballymacarby, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, Ireland.

PA Number: 281/146/1-2

Manufacturer

KRKA, d.d., Novo mesto, Šmarješka cesta 6, 8501 Novo mesto, Slovenia.

This medicinal product is authorised in the Member States of the EEA under the following names:

Name of the Member State	Name of the medicinal product
Denmark	Esomel
Ireland	Nexazole

This leaflet was last revised in July 2020

The following information is intended for healthcare professionals only:

Administration through gastric tube

1. Open the capsule and empty the pellets into an appropriate syringe and fill the syringe with approximately 25 ml water and approximately 5 ml air. For some tubes, dispersion in 50 ml water is needed to prevent the pellets from clogging the tube.
2. Immediately shake the syringe to evenly distribute the granules throughout the suspension.
3. Hold the syringe with the tip up and check that the tip has not clogged.
4. Attach the syringe to the tube whilst maintaining the above position.
5. Shake the syringe and position it with the tip pointing down. Immediately inject 5 - 10 ml into the tube. Invert the syringe after injection and shake (the syringe must be held with the tip pointing up to avoid clogging of the tip).
6. Turn the syringe with the tip down and immediately inject another 5 - 10 ml into the tube. Repeat this procedure until the syringe is empty.
7. Fill the syringe with 25 ml of water and 5 ml of air and repeat step 5 if necessary to wash down any sediment left in the syringe. For some tubes, 50 ml water is needed.

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