

**Patient Information**

**Nephrology Department**

**Alfacalcidol capsules (One-Alpha®)**

**Contact Information**

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 (Available Monday - Friday 8:30am until 2pm)

V1: 08/2017 EH/SSG/SPU

**What is alfacalcidol and what does it do?**

Alfacalcidol is from a group of medicines called vitamin D analogues. It is used to control calcium and phosphate levels in the body. It is used to manage changes to the bones which can be caused by kidney failure.

Alfacalcidol increases blood calcium levels and to controls the parathyroid hormone (PTH) levels.

Many patients who are prescribed alfacalcidol will also take a medication called a phosphate binder. Together they are used to ensure good control of your phosphate and calcium levels.

**Why have I been prescribed alfacalcidol?**

Your kidneys are no longer controlling the levels of vitamin D in your body by themselves, and therefore the levels of parathyroid hormone (PTH) and calcium are affected. Alfacalcidol will help to maintain these levels and prevent complications, such as renal bone disease.

**How do I take my alfacalcidol?**

Alfacalcidol is often taken between 3 times a week or daily. If you are unsure you should check with your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse. The label on the box should also give you this information.

Alfacalcidol capsules are available in 3 different strengths and the colour of the capsule is different for each strength. In order to make up the correct dose you may need to take more than one capsule.

**Will I need to have tests or be monitored whilst taking alfacalcidol?**

Your doctor will monitor the levels of calcium and parathyroid hormone (PTH) regularly. Your dose of alfacalcidol will be adjusted depending on the results.

**Does alfacalcidol have any side effects?**

Alfacalcidol is similar to the natural active form of vitamin D and does not have unexpected side effects. However whilst taking alfacalcidol it is important to ensure that the calcium level in the blood does not become too high (hypercalcaemia). In order to ensure this does not happen, your doctor will regularly check your calcium levels.

If you believe that you are experiencing or have experienced side effects related to alfacalcidol capsules please contact your doctor or specialist nurse for advice.

**Special cautions when taking alfacalcidol**

The One-Alpha® brand of alfacalcidol contains sesame oil, therefore people who suffer from rare peanut allergy should avoid taking this brand. If you believe this applies to you, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse as soon as possible.

**Does alfacalcidol interact with other medications?**

Some medications which are used for the treatment of epilepsy (phenobarbitone, phenytoin, carbamazepine) reduce vitamin D levels in the body. Your doctor will adjust your alfacalcidol dose accordingly if you are taking these medications.

You should avoid vitamin supplements that contain vitamin D, this includes multivitamin tablets and fish oil preparations (including cod liver oil).

You should only take tablets which are prescribed for you by your doctor and check with your pharmacist before taking any new or over-the-counter medications.

**Further information**

Further information about your medication can be found in the patient information leaflet found in the tablet box or on the container.