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Rasagiline for Parkinson's disease (Azilect)

Take one tablet each day.

Keep your regular appointments with your doctor so your progress can be monitored.

As your condition improves and your body movements become easier, be careful not to overdo physical activities.

Do not stop taking this medicine without speaking with your doctor first - stopping suddenly can cause problems.

About rasagiline for Parkinson's disease

Type of medicine	Dopaminergic drug (monoamine-oxidase-B inhibitor)
Used for	Parkinson's disease
Also called	Azilect®
Available as	Tablets

The cause of [Parkinson's disease](#) is still unknown but the symptoms of tremor, stiffness and slow movement are due to there being less of a chemical called dopamine in your brain. Rasagiline increases the amount of dopamine in the brain and so helps to relieve these symptoms.

You may be prescribed rasagiline on its own as a treatment for Parkinson's disease. It is also used alongside other treatments which contain a medicine called levodopa. When a dose of levodopa starts to wear off, the symptoms of Parkinson's disease can return. This is known as an 'end-of-dose fluctuation'. Taking rasagiline helps to prevent this problem.

Before taking rasagiline for Parkinson's disease

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking rasagiline it is important that your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- If you have a problem with the way your liver works.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take rasagiline

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. The leaflet will give you more information about rasagiline and a full list of side-effects which you may experience from taking it.
- Take rasagiline tablets exactly as your doctor has told you. Take one tablet a day. Try to take the tablets at the same time of day each day, as this will help you to remember to take them.
- You can take the tablets before or after meals.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day, skip the missed dose. Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.
- As your condition improves and your body movements become easier, be careful not to overdo physical activities. You should increase your activity gradually to allow your body to adjust to any changes in balance, circulation and co-ordination.
- If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take alongside this medicine. Rasagiline should not be taken with medicines containing sympathomimetics. These are present in some remedies for coughs and colds, and in decongestant nasal sprays and tablets.
- If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking rasagiline.
- Stopping treatment suddenly can cause problems and your doctor will want you to reduce your dose gradually if this is necessary. Do not stop taking this medicine without speaking with your doctor first.

Can rasagiline cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, all medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. These usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Very common rasagiline side-effects - these affect more than 1 in 10 people who take this medicine	What can I do if I experience this?
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask a pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Uncontrolled movements	Let your doctor know about this
Common rasagiline side-effects - these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people who take this medicine	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), indigestion, tummy (abdominal) pain, wind	Eat simple meals - avoid rich or spicy foods
Feeling dizzy when you stand up	Try getting up more slowly. Do not drive and do not use tools or machines until the dizziness has passed
Muscle weakness, balance problems, falls	If this becomes troublesome, let your doctor know
Constipation	Eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water each day
Dry mouth	Try chewing sugar-free gum or sucking sugar-free sweets
Chest pains	Let your doctor know about this straightaway

New or changing growths or marks (lesions) on the skin	Let your doctor know about this straightaway
Flu-like symptoms, feeling unwell, aches and pains, loss of appetite, feeling depressed, increased urgency to pass urine, conjunctivitis, unusual dreams and thoughts	Let your doctor know if any of these become troublesome

Rarely, rasagiline may cause people to have impulsive thoughts or cravings which are difficult to resist. This could include excessive shopping or spending, gambling or an increased sex drive. Let your doctor know if you or your family/carer notice any new behaviours which cause concern.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to this medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store rasagiline

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital at once. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Azilect® 1 mg Tablets](#); Teva Pharmaceuticals Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated March 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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