

About omega-3 fatty acid compounds

Omacor® (contains omega-3-acid ethyl esters)
Maxepa® (contains omega-3-marine triglycerides)

The omega-3 fatty acid compounds (omega-3-acid ethyl esters and omega-3-marine triglycerides) are essential fatty acids. This means that they need to be obtained from the diet because the body cannot produce them. The main source of these fatty acids is from fish oils.

Omega-3 fatty acids work by reducing the production of saturated fats called *triglycerides* in the body. They also decrease the production of a substance called *thromboxane* which is one of the chemicals that causes platelets to clump together and start the process of blood-clotting.

Before taking omega-3 fatty acid compounds

Before taking omega-3 fatty acid compounds make sure your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breast-feeding.
- If you take warfarin tablets.
- If you have any bleeding problems.
- If you have recently had surgery.
- If you have liver problems.
- If you have asthma.
- If you have diabetes.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to this or any other medicine.
- If you are taking any other medicines, including those available to buy without a prescription, herbal and complementary medicines.

How to take omega-3 fatty acid compounds

- Take omega-3 fatty acid compounds with or immediately after eating food.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is time for your next dose. Do not take two doses at the same time to make up.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Omega-3 fatty acid compounds are less effective if you are greatly overweight. It may be important for you to go on a weight reducing diet. However, check with your doctor before going on any diet.
- Patients with liver diseases should have their liver function monitored regularly while taking this medicine. If this affects you, your doctor will advise you about this.
- There is no information available on the safety of this medicine during pregnancy and breastfeeding, therefore speak to your doctor if you become pregnant while taking this medicine.
- Keep your regular appointments with your doctor so your progress can be checked.

Can omega-3 fatty acid compounds cause problems

Along with their useful effects all medicines can cause unwanted side effects which usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side effects continue or become troublesome.

Common side-effects - these affect less than 1 in 10 people who take this medicine

Feeling sick, indigestion

What can I do if I experience this

Eat little and often. Stick to simple foods

How to store omega-3 fatty acid compounds

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

