

# Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) Pregnancy Prevention Program (PPP) Patient Guide

This material was developed by Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Canada Inc., as part of the risk minimization plan for Hanzema™. This material is not intended for promotional use.

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For more information about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and the Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) Pregnancy Prevention Program (PPP), please visit our website [www.hanzema.ca](http://www.hanzema.ca) or call Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Canada Inc., at **1(877)767-2260**.

# 1. Introduction

## About this guide

Your doctor has prescribed Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) which is used for adults with severe chronic hand eczema that has not improved after topical treatments, including steroids. This guide will provide you with information about your condition and treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

The information in this guide is intended for both male and female patients. However, it also contains specific information for females about the risk of possible birth defects when taking this medicine. It is part of the Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) Pregnancy Prevention Program (PPP).

Before taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), you must read this guide carefully to understand important facts about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Please read it all the way through. Additional important information about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) will be provided in each prescription of Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Please also read and follow these instructions.

This information is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor and healthcare team. After reading this guide, you should consult your doctor if you have any questions about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) or your condition.

## About the Pregnancy Prevention Program (PPP)

The active ingredient of Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) is alitretinoin. Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) belongs to a class of drugs (retinoids) known to cause severe birth defects. This means that if you take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) during pregnancy, there is a very high risk that your baby will be born with birth defects. Severe birth defects have been observed in babies of women who took other retinoids, even when only taken for a short period during pregnancy. There is also an increased risk that you will suffer a miscarriage, premature birth, or death of the baby.

For these reasons, women who can potentially become pregnant are not allowed under any circumstances to use Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), unless all instructions described in the "Pregnancy Prevention" section of this guide are followed. For male patients: There are no special contraception requirements.

## 2. Information on Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

### About Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

#### What is Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)?

Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) belongs to a group of medicines known as “retinoids” which are related to Vitamin A.

#### Why have you been prescribed Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)?

Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) is used for adult patients with severe Chronic Hand Eczema that has not improved after topical treatments, including steroids.

#### How do I take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)?

Take one Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) capsule (10 mg or 30 mg) prescribed by your doctor once daily, preferably at the same time each day, with a main meal. If you forget to take a dose of Hanzema it may be taken later the same day, but do not take more Hanzema in one day than your doctor has prescribed. Do not double dose. Swallow each capsule whole and don't chew them.

Read your prescription label carefully and be sure to take the exact amount of medicine prescribed by your doctor. Your doctor may change your prescribed dose from time to time, therefore, it is important that you check the label each time you fill your Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) prescription.

#### How do I store Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)?

Keep Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) out of sight and reach from children. Hanzema should be stored between 15° to 30°C. Store in the original carton to protect from light. Do not freeze. Keep the blister strips in the outer carton to protect from light.

#### Does Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) have any side effects?

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

- **Headache**
- **Raised blood fats:** higher levels of fats (triglycerides) and cholesterol in the blood
- **Blood cell disorders:** increase in the number of blood platelets (cells that help blood to clot), decrease in the number of red and white blood cells seen in blood tests
- **Thyroid problems:** decreased levels of thyroid hormones
- **Eye problems:** inflammation of the eye and eyelid area (conjunctivitis); eyes feel dry and irritated. Ask a pharmacist for suitable eye drops. If you wear contact lenses and get dry eyes, you may need to wear glasses instead.
- **Blood and circulation:** flushing, high blood pressure, inflammation of blood vessels, swelling of the hands, lower legs and feet
- **Muscle and joint pain:** back pain, muscle pain, joint pain. High levels of muscle breakdown products in your blood if you exercise vigorously.

- **Skin, nail and hair problems:** dryness of the skin, especially of the lips and face, inflamed skin, redness of the skin, itchy skin, skin peeling, rash, dry skin eczema, itchy skin rash, hair loss, increased sensitivity of the skin to sunlight, nail disorders, abnormal hair texture (e.g. curling of the hair)
- **Liver problems:** raised liver enzymes seen in blood tests
- **Sensory problems:** dizziness, persistent noise in the ears
- **General:** nausea, vomiting, dry mouth, lack of energy (fatigue)
- **Ear, nose and throat problems:** nose bleeding
- **Bone disorders:** extra growth of bone, including the spine disorder ankylosing spondylitis
- **Stomach problems:** indigestion
- **Vision:** blurred, distorted vision, difficulty seeing at night. If you suffer these problems, do not drive or operate machinery until these symptoms have passed. If vision problems persist, contact your doctor and your doctor may stop HANZEMA treatment and may refer you to an eye specialist.

**Side effects of other medicines in the same family of medications as HANZEMA.**

The following effects haven't yet been seen in HANZEMA but have occurred in this product class and may occur.

- **Diabetes**  
Excessive thirst; frequent need to urinate; blood tests show an increase in your blood sugar.
- **Bone disorders**  
Arthritis; bone disorders (delayed growth, changes to bone density); growing bones may stop growing.
- **Visual disorders**  
Colour blindness and colour vision gets worse.

**Serious side effects**

If you see any of the following symptoms/effects, contact your doctor or pharmacist right away

Symptom/Effect	Frequency
<b>Depression and other mental problems</b> including sad or empty mood, mood changes, tearfulness, and emotional disorder. Some people have had thoughts about harming themselves or ending their lives, have attempted suicide or committed suicide. These people may not appear to be depressed. Your doctor can arrange help. You should tell a family member or close friend that you can become depressed, or have significant changes in mood or behaviour, and ask them to read this leaflet. You might ask them to look after you.	Common
<b>Sight problems</b> including blurred vision, distorted vision, cloudy surface on the eye (corneal opacity, cataracts).	Uncommon- Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away

<b>Severe allergic reaction</b> including swelling of the face or mouth causing difficulty in breathing (angioedema), raised and itchy rash (hives).	Rare - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away
<b>Immune reaction</b> including vasculitis (swelling of the blood vessel) with symptom such as bruises and red patches.	Rare - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away
<b>Benign Intracranial Hypertension</b> Lasting headache along with feeling sick (nausea), being sick (vomiting), and changes in your eyesight including blurred vision.	Rare - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away
<b>Stomach disorders</b> Severe abdominal (tummy) pain, with or without bloody diarrhea, feeling sick (nausea) and being sick (vomiting). These can be signs of serious abdominal conditions.	Very Rare - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away
<b>Keratitis</b> (inflamed cornea).	Unknown - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away
<b>Pancreatitis</b> (inflammation of the pancreas) which can be fatal, with symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and fatty stool.	Unknown - Stop taking drug and call your doctor or pharmacist right away

Please read the leaflet contained within your Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) prescription carefully for details about the side effects.

You should also discuss any side effects you experience while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) with your doctor as soon as possible. Your doctor is the best person to advise you about all aspects of your treatment. For example, your doctor may advise you to take a lower dose of Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Your doctor may also advise you to discontinue treatment if the side effects cannot be managed.

Please see the “**What You Need To Know**” section for more information.

**Please read the leaflet in your Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) prescription before starting treatment**

Do not take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) if you are pregnant or if you can become pregnant and are not using two effective birth control measures. There is a high risk that Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) can cause severe birth defects. You must make sure you are not pregnant before you start taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). You must strictly avoid pregnancy during treatment and for 1 month after stopping treatment.



# 3. What You Need To Know

Important information about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

## What to do before taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

**Before taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), you should tell your doctor if:**

- You are pregnant or planning to become pregnant
- You have ever had any mental health problems, including depression, suicidal behaviour or psychosis, or if you take medicines for any of these conditions
- You have high blood cholesterol or triglycerides or have a blood lipid (fats) disorder, risk of heart problems or are obese. If so, you may need blood tests more often. If your blood cholesterol or triglycerides are high, your doctor may lower your dose, or take you off Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)
- You have been suffering from thyroid disease. Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) may lower your thyroid hormone levels. If your thyroid hormone level is low, your doctor may prescribe supplements
- You plan vigorous physical activity during treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)
- You have any food or drug allergies
- You are taking vitamin preparations or health food supplements that contain Vitamin A
- You are taking certain contraceptives. There are certain types of contraceptives that should not be taken while on Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Microdosed progesterone-only preparations (mini-pills) are not a suitable method of contraception during Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) therapy
- You are taking an antibiotic (particularly tetracyclines)
- You are taking ketoconazole, fluconazole, or miconazole (medicines used to treat fungal infections)
- You are taking methotrexate, gemfibrozil, St. John's Wort, or amiodarone
- You have liver disease, kidney disease, or high lipid levels in your blood
- You have diabetes. HANZEMA may increase blood sugar levels. Your doctor may request periodic tests for blood sugar levels during treatment, particularly if you already have diabetes or are overweight.

You will have to see your doctor during treatment to check how your body is responding to Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Blood tests and other tests can help your doctor identify problems you may not be able to notice, such as an increase in blood fats.

## Dos and Don'ts While Taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

### All patients:

<p><b>Do not</b> donate blood.</p>	<p>Do not give blood while you take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and for 1 month after stopping Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment. If someone who is pregnant gets your donated blood, her baby may be exposed to Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and may be born with severe birth defects.</p>
<p><b>Do not</b> share Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) with other people.</p>	<p>Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) is a prescription product that can cause severe birth defects and other serious health problems. Do not share it with anyone else – especially females – even if another person has the same condition as you.</p>
<p><b>Do not</b> keep unused Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)</p>	<p>You must return all unused Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) to your doctor or pharmacist at the end of your treatment.</p>
<p><b>Do not</b> take tetracyclines or methotrexate while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).</p>	<p>Using tetracycline together with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) can increase the risk for side effects. Methotrexate can increase the risk of liver toxicity when taken with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).</p>
<p><b>Do</b> minimize your exposure to sunlight and sun lamps (tanning machines).</p>	<p>Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) may make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Before you go out in the sun, wear protective clothing and use a sun protection product with a high protection factor (SPF 15 or higher).</p>
<p><b>Do</b> see your doctor regularly.</p>	<p>Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) may affect blood cholesterol, triglycerides, liver enzymes, or thyroid function so it is important to see your doctor every month.</p>
<p><b>Do</b> tell all of your healthcare practitioners about all medications and health supplements you are taking.</p>	<p>Some medications and health supplements can interfere with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and your body. All of your doctors should know about all the medications and health supplements you are taking, including vitamin preparations, especially if they contain Vitamin A. You should not take Vitamin A supplements while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) as it may increase your chance of side effects</p>

<b>Do</b> cut down on intensive physical activity if you experience muscle or joint pain	Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) may cause muscle or joint pain. Cutting down on intensive physical activity may help.
<b>Do</b> apply a lubricating eye ointment or an artificial tears product if you experience dry eyes.	Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) may cause dry eyes. Lubricating eye ointment or tear replacement drops can help you cope with this side effect. If you wear contact lenses, you may want to wear glasses for the duration of your treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Dry eyes and sight problems usually return to normal once treatment is stopped.

**Female patients:**

<b>Do not</b> get pregnant while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and for 1 month after treatment.	Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) can cause severe birth defects. You must have two negative pregnancy tests at least 3 weeks apart before you start Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). You must wait until the second or third day of your next normal menstrual period before you start Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). You must use two complementary, effective methods of contraception and an effective barrier method 1 month prior to starting Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), during treatment, and for 1 month after stopping treatment. You must have a medically supervised pregnancy test every month while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and a final test 1 month after stopping treatment. Stop taking HANZEMA and contact your doctor immediately if you do become pregnant while taking HANZEMA or during the first month after treatment has stopped, if you miss your period, or if you have sexual intercourse without using effective birth control. You should discuss with your doctor the serious risk of your baby having severe birth deformities because you are taking or have taken HANZEMA.
<b>Do not</b> breast-feed while you take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and for 1 month after stopping Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment.	Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) is very likely to enter breast milk. Do not take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) if you are breastfeeding.
<b>Do not</b> take microdosed progesterone-only birth control pills (mini-pills).	Microdosed progesterone-only preparations (mini-pills) are not a suitable method of contraception as they may not work during Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) therapy



<p><b>Do</b> use two complementary, effective methods of contraception 1 month before treatment, during treatment, and for 1 month after discontinuing treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).</p>	<p>Bearing in mind that any method of birth control may fail, you must use two effective and complementary forms of contraception without interruption including a barrier method, even if you have a history of infertility or are not sexually active. Please see “Pregnancy prevention” section for detailed information about contraception and talk to your doctor before starting Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)</p>
<p><b>Do not</b> take the supplement St John's Wort (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>) if you are taking an oral contraceptive.</p>	<p>St. John's Wort (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>) can interact with oral contraceptives and may decrease their effectiveness in preventing pregnancy.</p>

## When to contact your doctor

### All patients:

- While taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), contact your doctor immediately if you encounter any of the following:
  - You feel depressed, sad, or have an empty mood
  - You experience any problems with your sight/vision (particularly at night, or if colour blindness occurs)
  - You have persistent dry eyes
  - You have aches or pains in your bones/joints
  - You get a persistent headache, dizziness, nausea or vomiting
  - You have severe stomach pain, with or without bloody diarrhea, severe diarrhea, or rectal bleeding
  - You have excessive thirst or a frequent need to urinate

### Female patients:

While taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), and for 1 month after stopping treatment, you should contact your doctor immediately if:

- You think you may be pregnant
- You have had unprotected sex
- You miss your menstrual period

Talk to your doctor about any side effects you experience while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

# 4. Pregnancy Prevention

## Pregnancy prevention and Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)

### Warning: Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) can cause severe birth defects

The active ingredient of Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) is Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) belongs to a class of drugs (retinoids) known to cause severe birth defects. This means that if you take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) during pregnancy, there is a very high risk that your baby will be born with malformations including:

- Defects of the central nervous system (e.g., hydrocephaly)
- Cerebral malformations/abnormalities
- Microcephaly
- Facial dysmorphia (e.g., cleft palate, external ear abnormalities like absence of external ear, small or absent external auditory canals, eye abnormalities like microphthalmia)
- Cardiovascular abnormalities
- Thymus gland and parathyroid gland abnormalities



**Taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) while pregnant also increases the risk of miscarriage, premature birth, or death of the baby.**

### Overview of the Pregnancy Prevention Program (PPP)

You must not take Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) if you are pregnant. You must avoid becoming pregnant for 1 month prior to treatment, during treatment and for 1 month after stopping treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). You must have two negative pregnancy tests at least 3 weeks apart before you start HANZEMA. The first test should be done when your doctor decides you have qualified for Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) therapy and conducted in the first 3 days of your menstrual cycle. The second test should be performed in a licensed laboratory after having used two simultaneous methods of contraception (birth control) for at least 4 weeks, and within 11 days before you begin your treatment. HANZEMA treatment should start on the second or third day of the next normal menstrual period following the second negative pregnancy test.

Your doctor will perform pregnancy testing on a monthly basis during treatment and 1 month after stopping treatment. You must use two effective methods of contraception and an effective barrier method 1 month before treatment, during treatment, and 1 month after stopping treatment. Two effective methods are required because no method offers 100% protection.

If you have a male sexual partner, he must understand the importance of contraception and the potential consequences if you become pregnant during Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment. Make sure he understands the facts with respect to birth control and the high risk of birth defects in pregnant women who have used Hanzema™ (alitretinoin). He must understand the

need for two methods of birth control without interruption including a barrier method 1 month before, during, and 1 month after stopping treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

You must also use contraception if you are currently sexually inactive, unless your doctor has confirmed that there is no risk for you to become pregnant (e.g., after hysterectomy). This is important because unprotected sex can happen unexpectedly.

The following information explains the use and the efficacy of various methods of contraception. By using two methods of contraception, you significantly decrease the risk of pregnancy. This information is meant to complement, but not replace, your doctor's instructions. You should discuss the methods of your choice with your doctor before starting Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment.

## **Suitable contraception methods for you**

As a background to suitable contraception methods, a variety of contraceptive methods are available on the market. To find the most suitable methods for yourself, you should discuss all available methods with your doctor. Your choice will depend on your age, your general health, your family history, and individual needs. You may already be on an appropriate, effective method of contraception which can be continued during the treatment.

Not all available methods of contraception are equally effective. Therefore, it is important to know which methods may be the most effective and how they must be used. Informing yourself about the available methods will facilitate the discussion with your doctor.

It is recommended that you use a primary method (e.g., a combination oral contraceptive, “the pill”), combined with a secondary method (e.g., a condom for men), in order to prevent pregnancy as effectively as possible. At least one of these forms of contraception must be a primary form, unless you have undergone a hysterectomy. Any birth control method can fail. Therefore, it is critically important that you use 2 effective and complementary forms of contraception simultaneously if you are a female of reproductive potential. Effective contraception must be used for at least one month before starting Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment, during treatment and for at least one month following the discontinuation of Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) treatment.

Contraception must be used unless permanent infertility has been medically diagnosed. Even if you claim to absence of sexual activity, you must be advised to employ contraception while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), following the above guidelines. Contraception must be used for at least one month after stopping treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin), even in patients with amenorrhea.

### Effective forms of contraception:

Primary methods*	Secondary methods*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tubal sterilisation</li><li>• Partner's vasectomy</li><li>• Intrauterine device(IUD)</li><li>• Hormonal (combination oral contraceptives, transdermal patch, injectables, or vaginal ring)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Male condom with or without spermicide</li><li>• Diaphragm with spermicide</li><li>• Cervical cap with spermicide</li><li>• Vaginal sponge(contains spermicide)</li></ul>

\* Progestogen-only contraceptives ("mini-pills") and female condoms are inadequate methods of contraception for use with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

## Pregnancy Test Documentation

Pregnancy testing must be performed under medical supervision and must have a minimal sensitivity of 25 mIU/mL. The dates and results of the pregnancy tests must be recorded.

In order to exclude an existing pregnancy before starting contraception, it is recommended to first perform a medically supervised pregnancy test during the first 3 days of your menstrual cycle. Your doctor will discuss contraceptive measures with you and ask that you start the selected methods of contraception after having obtained a negative pregnancy test. Your doctor will ask you to return for a follow up after 4 weeks of effective contraception. He/she will ask you to present the (negative) result of a pregnancy test performed in a licensed laboratory, must be performed within 11 days prior to starting HANZEMA treatment. If you fulfill the requirements, your doctor will prescribe Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

Pregnancy testing must be done at monthly intervals throughout your treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and 1 month after the end of treatment.

This final pregnancy test is required 1 month after stopping treatment with Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) to make sure that no pregnancy is exposed to Hanzema™ (alitretinoin).

Your doctor will track your pregnancy tests using the "Documentation of Pregnancy Testing" form.

## Documenting your consent

Your doctor will ask you to confirm in writing that you have been informed about the high risk of fetal birth defects if you become pregnant while taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) or within 1 month after stopping treatment. You will also have to confirm that you understand and accept the need to use two effective and complementary methods of birth control at the same time, even if you have a history of infertility or are not sexually active for 1 month before starting treatment, during treatment and for 1 month after treatment.

Please familiarize yourself with the “Informed Consent Form for Patients Taking Hanzema™ (alitretinoin)” and clarify any questions with your doctor before signing your consent.

**Confidentiality Statement**

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No part of it may be transmitted, reproduced, published or used by any person/s without prior written authorisation from Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories Canada Inc.

This Patient Guide is downloaded from [www.hanzema.ca](http://www.hanzema.ca), where more information about Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) and the Hanzema™ (alitretinoin) Pregnancy Prevention Program can be found.