

Ranitidine (Zantac) is used to block acid production in the stomach, for indigestion, acid reflux, heartburn, ulcer treatment and treatment of Zollinger-Ellison syndrome. Ranitidine works by blocking histamine H2 receptors in the gut (similar to Cimetidine).

Side effects from Ranitidine are unusual but can include diarrhoea, dizziness or rashes which usually do not last. Slight enlargement of the breasts in men has been reported in Ranitidine users but usually stops when treatment ends.

Other examples of drugs in the same group include Famotidine (Pepcid), Nizatidine (Axid) and Cimetidine (Tagamet).

There has been [recent research](#) suggesting that Cimetidine can increase survival in some people with colorectal cancer (bowel cancer) if Cimetidine is used for five days before surgery - 800mg Cimetidine twice daily. Cimetidine does stimulate the immune system and this may be part of the explanation. (Cancer Journal 85:1658-63, 1999).

The Lancet also reports reduction in cancer formation in mice (melanoma) who have been given Cimetidine. (Lancet 21 March 1981)