



*Better
Together*

Patient information

Letrozole (Femara)

Breast Services Directorate

What is Letrozole?

Letrozole is a tried and tested drug, which is used in the treatment of breast cancer. It may be given after surgery, or in some patients it may be the only treatment needed.

Why am I being given Letrozole?

Letrozole has been shown to be an effective treatment for patients who have breast cancer and are past the menopause (change of life).

How does it work?

Many breast cancers use the female hormone (oestrogen) to grow. You will only be given Letrozole if you have this hormone positive type of cancer. (This type of breast cancer is the most common sort.)

After the menopause, the ovaries stop working, but two substances come together in the body to make a small amount of oestrogen. Letrozole stops these substances coming together and this means there is less oestrogen going to the breast.

What is the dose?

Letrozole is taken as one 2.5mg tablet each day. The hospital clinic will prescribe one months treatment and you will need to get repeat prescriptions from your GP.

What happens if I forget one day?

Don't worry; after you have been on Letrozole for a few days, the amount in your bloodstream will get you by. Take your next tablet at the usual time the next day. Remember to pack enough tablets if you go away on holiday.

If you think you have accidentally taken an extra tablet, don't panic. You are unlikely to have done any harm. Take your tablet as normal the next day.

What are the side effects?

Most people have very few side effects with Letrozole, but everyone is different. The side effects listed here will not affect everyone and may be different if you are taking more than one drug. If you are concerned about any of these side effects please speak to your Breast Care Nurse.

- **Nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting** - these effects are rare and usually mild. Try taking your tablet with food or a milky drink.
- **Tiredness and headaches** - these are not common. Make sure you are getting enough rest. Let your doctor know about headaches, as you can be prescribed medication to help.
- **Muscular aches and joint pain** - these are rare, but painkillers can help.
- **Hot flushes** - these are usually mild and wear off after a while.
- **Vaginal dryness** - there are gels that can be bought in any chemist or you can get them from your GP.
- **Bone thinning (osteoporosis)** - Letrozole can cause some thinning of the bones, so you will be prescribed a calcium and vitamin D tablet called Adcal D3 to protect your bones and you will also have a scan to see how strong they are within a couple of months of starting the treatment. This will be repeated in the future to see if there has been any change.

- **Hair thinning** - a few women have reported this, but it is usually mild.

Can I take Letrozole with other medicines?

Letrozole is safe to take with other medicines.

Can I drink alcohol when taking Letrozole?

Yes it is safe to drink alcohol.

What will happen if I decide not to have this treatment - are there any alternatives?

There may be an alternative to letrozole, this and the affects of not having treatment can be discussed with your consultant or Breast Care Nurse if you wish.

Further information

If you need more information, please contact your Breast Care Nurse, your GP or your hospital consultant.

Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialists (Breast Care Nurses)

Tel: 0151 706 2927 (24hr answerphone)

Text phone number: 0151 706 2927

Breast Nurse Practitioners

Tel: 0151 706 2931

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2931

Or you may like to contact:

Breast Cancer Care:

Tel: 0800 800 6000

Website: www.breastcancercare.org.uk

Macmillan

Tel: 0808 808 00 00

Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

There are many local support groups please ask your Macmillan Breast Care Nurse for details.

Author: Breast Care Nursing Services

Review date: April 2017

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

يمكن توفير جميع المعلومات المتعلقة بالمرضى الموافق عليهم من قبل ائتمان المستشفى عند الطلب بصيغ أخرى، بما في ذلك لغات أخرى وبطرق تسهل قراءتها وبالحروف والطباعة الكبيرة وبالصوت وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبطريقة مون والكترونيا.

所有經信托基金批准的患者資訊均可以其它格式提供，包括其它語言、易讀閱讀軟件、大字體、音頻、盲文、穆恩體 (Moon) 盲文和電子格式，敬請索取。

در صورت تمایل می‌توانید کلیه اطلاعات تصویب شده توسط اتحادیه در رابطه با بیماران را به اشکال مختلف در دسترس داشته باشید، از جمله به زبانهای دیگر، به زبان ساده، چاپ درشت، صوت، خط مخصوص کوران، مون و بصورت روی خطی موجود است.

زانیاری پیوندیدار بهو نمخوشانهی له‌لایمن تراستهوه پاسهند کراون، نهمگر داوا بکریت له فورماتکائی تردا بریتی له زمانهکائی تر، نیز ی رید (هاسان خونندنهوه)، چاپی گهوره، شریتی دهنگ، هیللی موون و نمایکترۆنیکي همیه.

所有经信托基金批准的患者信息均可以其它格式提供，包括其它语言、易读阅读软件、大字体、音频、盲文、穆恩体 (Moon) 盲文和电子格式，敬请索取。

Dhammaan warbixinta bukaanleyda ee Ururka ee la oggol yahay waxaa marka la codsado lagu heli karaa nuskhado kale, sida luqado kale, akhris fudud, far waaweyn, dhegeysi, farta braille ee dadka indhaha la', Moon iyo nidaam eletaroonig ah.