

Treatment for hot flushes

Cyproterone acetate may be used to treat hot flushes caused by other hormone treatments (LHRH agonists or orchidectomy). To start with you may take 50mg once a day, which can be increased to 100mg or 150mg if needed. Some specialist teams may do things differently.

What are the side effects?

Like all drugs, cyproterone acetate may cause side effects in some men. The risk of side effects may vary depending on the dose you are taking. We have listed the most common ones here but you should tell your specialist team if you notice any other changes while you are having treatment.

Some men get very few side effects and others get more. Many side effects will only last for as long as you are taking the drug. However, if you take cyproterone acetate for a long period of time, it may take several months after you finish treatment for the side effects to stop.

You can find out more about the side effects of hormone therapy and ways that you can manage them by reading our booklet **Living with hormone therapy: A guide for men with prostate cancer.**

Before you take cyproterone acetate, you should tell your doctor if:

- You have liver problems. Higher doses of cyproterone acetate (200mg to 300mg) can affect how well your liver works after several months of treatment. You will have regular blood tests to check your liver for as long as you are taking the drug.
- You are a heavy drinker. You may not be able to take cyproterone acetate, as alcohol may stop it from working properly.
- You have any problems with your blood, heart or circulation.
- You have a history of blood clots, strokes or heart attacks, sickle-cell anaemia or severe diabetes that affects your blood circulation. This is because cyproterone acetate has caused blood clots in some men.

You should also let your specialist team know if you are taking any prescription or over-the-counter medicines.

Loss of sex drive

Cyproterone acetate may cause you to lose your sex drive (libido) for as long as you are taking the drug. After you have been taking cyproterone acetate for a few months your sperm count is likely to drop. You will probably not be able to make anyone pregnant but it is important to remember that this does not happen straight away. You should still use contraception if you want to avoid having children. Cyproterone acetate may cause some of your sperm to become abnormal in shape. Some experts believe that abnormal sperm might possibly lead to babies being born with abnormalities, but we do not know this for sure. Speak to your specialist team if you are thinking of having children.

Weight changes

You may either put on or lose weight if you take cyproterone acetate for a long period of time.

Anxiety and depression

Cyproterone acetate affects your hormone levels and this can cause mood swings. If you have depression, cyproterone acetate can make your symptoms worse. Your specialist team can offer support and advice.

Breast swelling and tenderness

Some men may experience breast swelling (gynaecomastia) and tenderness in the breast area. This can affect one or both breasts and can range from mild sensitivity to ongoing pain. The amount of swelling can also vary from a small amount to a more noticeable enlarged area.

Tiredness

You may feel tired when you start to take cyproterone acetate. You may find that your tiredness improves over time but many men find that regular exercise gives them more energy and helps them to cope with treatment.

How long will I need to take cyproterone?

The length of time you take cyproterone for depends on why you are taking it and how well it is working.

Speak to your specialist team or call our confidential Helpline for information on other treatments that can be used if hormone therapy is no longer controlling the cancer.

More information

To find out more about hormone therapy you can read:

- The Tool Kit fact sheet **Hormone Therapy**. This gives an overview of different types of hormone therapy.
- The booklet **Living with hormone therapy: A guide for men with prostate cancer**. This includes more detailed information on side effects and ways to manage them.

To order these publications call our Helpline on 0800 074 8383 or email us at literature@prostate-cancer.org. You can also download all of our publications from our website www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

Reporting unusual side effects: The Yellow Card Scheme

If you think you are experiencing a side effect from your medication that is not mentioned in the information leaflet that comes with it, then you can report it using the Yellow Card Scheme. This is run by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). They will investigate and if they find a problem with a medication then the MHRA will take action to protect the public. There are three ways you can report a side effect:

- Use the online Yellow Card form at www.yellowcard.gov.uk
- Ask your pharmacist for a Yellow Card form
- Call the Yellow Card freephone on 0808 100 3352

Notes

The Prostate Cancer Charity makes every effort to make sure that its services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate facts about prostate cancer. We hope that these will add to the medical advice you have had and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please contact your doctor if you are worried about any medical issues.

The Prostate Cancer Charity funds research into the causes of, and treatments for, prostate cancer. We also provide support and information to anyone concerned about prostate cancer. We rely on charitable donations to continue this work. If you would like to make a donation, please call us on 020 8222 7666.

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|  | <p>Free and confidential Helpline 0800 074 8383* Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm, Wed 7pm - 9pm</p> |
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Email: helpline@prostate-cancer.org.uk

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Reviewed February 2010
To be reviewed February 2012



* Calls are free of charge from UK landlines. Mobile phone charges may vary. Calls may be monitored for training purposes. Confidentiality is maintained between callers and The Prostate Cancer Charity.

A charity registered in England and Wales(1005541) and in Scotland (SCO39332)

References to sources of information used in the production of this fact sheet are available on our website.

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