

Hormone drug: Goserelin

(Brand names: Zoladex[®], Zoladex[®] LA)

This fact sheet is for men who are about to start, or are already taking, goserelin to control their prostate cancer. It explains how the drug is taken, why it is used and what side effects it may cause. Read our **Hormone therapy** fact sheet for more information about how hormone therapy is used to treat prostate cancer. We hope these fact sheets will help you to make decisions about your treatment. They should be used together with the information that comes with your medicine and the advice of your specialist team or pharmacist.

What is goserelin?

Goserelin is a form of hormone therapy called an LHRH (luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone) agonist. Its brand name is Zoladex.

Goserelin slows down the growth of prostate cancer cells by blocking a message from the brain telling the testicles to produce testosterone. Most prostate cancer cells need testosterone to grow and spread.

How do I take goserelin?

Goserelin is injected just under the skin of the abdomen. The injection is not usually painful but your skin may darken or redden for a short time afterwards. You may be given the injection by your GP, practice nurse, district nurse or at your local hospital.

You may have the injections every 28 days or every 12 weeks, depending on the dose of the drug. The two doses work equally well at controlling the cancer. The only difference between them is the length of time the drug works for.

Drug	Dose	How often
Zoladex	3.6 mg	Every 28 days
Zoladex LA	10.8 mg	Every 12 weeks

Tumour flare

A few days before starting goserelin treatment you will need to take a short course of anti-androgen tablets such as bicalutamide, flutamide or cyproterone acetate. Read our other **Hormone Drug** fact sheets for information on these drugs.

The anti-androgen prevents a temporary rise in the level of testosterone, which is the body's natural response to the first injection. This is called tumour flare and can cause an increase in pain and problems passing urine. You may continue to take the anti-androgen tablets for up to three weeks after starting goserelin.

What happens if I miss an injection?

The prostate cancer will not spread if your injection is delayed by a few days. If your treatment is missed for longer than this, the cancer may grow and any symptoms you have may get worse. If this happens you will need to start hormone injections again with a short course of anti-androgen tablets to prevent tumour flare.

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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Reviewed February 2008
To be reviewed February 2010

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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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