

Medication Information Sheet

degarelix (DEG-a-REL-ix)

This document provides general information about your medication. It does not replace the advice of your health care professional. Always discuss your therapy with your health care professional and refer to the package insert for more details.

Other Name: Firmagon®

Appearance: Clear solution

What is this medication for?

For treating prostate cancer.

What should I do before I have this medication?

- Tell your health care team if you have/had significant medical condition(s), especially if you have / had:
 - Heart problems (including irregular heartbeat)
 - Bone problems or thinning
- People who have cancer are at a higher risk of developing other cancers. Also, some cancer medications may increase this risk. You should discuss this with your doctor.

How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- While this may not be directly applicable to you, if there is **any chance** that your female partner may become pregnant, you and your partner together must:
 - ► Use 2 effective forms of birth control at the same time while taking this drug. Keep using birth control for at least **6 months** after your last dose unless your health care team told you differently. Talk to your health care team to figure out the best method(s) for you and/or your partner.
- Let your health care team know if your partner is pregnant or becomes pregnant during your degarelix treatment.
- This medication may affect fertility (ability to get your female partner pregnant).

How is this medication given?

- This drug is given by injection under the skin. Do not use pressure (waist band or belt) on the part where the shot is given.
- Your doctor or nurse will give this drug. Be sure to visit your doctor for your repeat injection. Speak to your health care professional to see what drugs and supplies you need to bring for your next visit.

What else do I need to know while on this medication?

- This medication can interact with other medications and can result in the treatment not working as well or cause severe side effects.
- Make sure your health care team knows about all your medications (prescription, over-the-counter, herbals and supplements). Check with your health care team before starting or stopping any of them.
- **For mild aches and pain or fever:**
 - If you feel unwell, take your temperature before taking any medications for pain or fever. They may hide a fever.
 - You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets. Ask your health care team about the right dose for you.
 - Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid, ASA), including low dose aspirin for heart conditions, may increase your chance of bleeding. Talk to your health care team before you start or stop these medications.
 - **Talk to your health care team or go to the closest emergency room right away if you have a fever.** See the [Fever](#) pamphlet for more information.
- Degarelix may cause dizziness. Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how the drug affects you.

How should I safely store this medication?

- Keep this medication in the original packaging at room temperature in a dry place, away from heat and light. Keep out of sight and reach of children and pets.
- Do not throw out any unused medications at home. Bring them to your pharmacy to be thrown away safely.

What are the side effects of this medication?

You may not have all of the side effects below. You may have side effects that are not listed.

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Common Side Effects (in 25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
<p>Reactions at the injection site</p> <p>Watch for pain, redness, itchiness, bruising, mild rash or swelling.</p>	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
<p>Hot flashes, feeling or wave of warmth</p> <p>You may sweat more or have trouble sleeping because of this.</p> <p>To help prevent hot flashes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid triggers such as spicy food, alcohol and caffeine (tea, coffee, and soft drinks), • Exercise regularly. Ask your health care team what exercises are appropriate for you before you start any new exercise. • Quitting smoking may also help. <p>If you have hot flashes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep cool; dress lightly or in layers that you can easily remove and drink plenty of liquids unless you have been told otherwise. • Hot flashes may improve over time. Talk to your health care team if this is bothersome for you. <p>Other symptoms of having low testosterone levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased sexual function or desire to have sex • Breast swelling or tenderness • Low energy 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Common Side Effects (in 25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood changes, depression • Thinning of the bone which may be severe and lead to fractures • High cholesterol and effects on your heart • Contact your health care team if these feelings bother you. 	

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Less Common Side Effects (in 10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
<p>Heart problems</p> <p>You may have an irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, chest pain, fainting spells or swelling in your legs, ankles and belly.</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p>Abnormal liver lab tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have yellowish skin or eyes, unusually dark pee or pain on the right side of your belly. Talk to your health care team if this happens. • Your doctor may monitor your liver regularly with a blood test. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe

Other rare, but serious side effects are possible.

If you experience ANY of the following, speak to your cancer health care provider or get emergency medical help right away:

- Sudden loss of vision, speech, or the use of your limb(s), pain in belly or limb.
- Fever, severe rash, itchiness, flushing, dizziness, shortness of breath, chest or throat tightness.

For more links on how to manage your symptoms go to www.cancercareontario.ca/symptoms.

The information set out in the medication information sheets, regimen information sheets, and symptom management information (for patients) contained in the Drug Formulary (the "Formulary") is intended to be used by health professionals and patients for informational purposes only. The information is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions or side effects of a certain drug, nor should it be used to indicate that use of a particular drug is safe, appropriate or effective for a given condition.

A patient should always consult a healthcare provider if he/she has any questions regarding the information set out in the Formulary. The information in the Formulary is not intended to act as or replace medical advice and should not be relied upon in any such regard. All uses of the Formulary are subject to clinical judgment and actual prescribing patterns may not follow the information provided in the Formulary.

