

**Patient
Information**

Finasteride for women

Introduction

This leaflet explains about finasteride and its use, including side effects.

You have been prescribed finasteride because you have been diagnosed with one of the following conditions: female pattern hair loss, lichen planopilaris, frontal fibrosing alopecia or hirsutism.

What is finasteride?

Finasteride is an inhibitor of 5-alpha reductase, an enzyme that converts (changes) testosterone to dihydrotestosterone (DHT) (the male hormones).

Finasteride is prescribed for conditions which are felt to be due to the accumulation (build up) of dihydrotestosterone (DHT) in tissues like hair follicles.

Use of finasteride in women

This medication is currently prescribed off label. This means that it is being used for a condition it was not previously meant to treat.

Finasteride has been prescribed by the consultant after careful consideration of other treatment options.

It is important to be aware that finasteride is classified as category X in pregnancy. This means that finasteride is not suitable for women who are likely to become pregnant, as it can change the levels of the male hormones which may affect a male baby's development.

Recommended dose of finasteride?

The recommend dose of finasteride is 2.5mg, sometimes a 5mg tablet is required in order to get the desired effect.

Reference No.

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Department

Dermatology

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February 2028

Patient Information

Side effects of finasteride

- Mood changes (anxiety and depression) in 1 in every 150 patients.
- Difficulty concentrating (this is rare).
- Enlargement of breast tissue and sometimes breast tenderness (this is rare).

Other side effects may be possible but many patients take finasteride without any side effects.

If you develop any side effects while taking finasteride, please contact Dr Takwale's secretary. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

Important points to remember

- Finasteride must not be used in pregnancy or when breastfeeding as there is no research to suggest that it is safe to do so.
- You **must not** donate blood while taking finasteride. If a pregnant woman needed a blood transfusion the presence of finasteride in the donated blood could impact the baby's development.
- Please read the patient information leaflet enclosed with the medication.

Contact information

Dr Takwale's Secretary

Tel: 0300 422 5396

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>