

Goserelin acetate (Zoladex[®]) treatment for benign gynaecological conditions

Introduction

This leaflet gives you advice and information about goserelin acetate (Zoladex[®]) treatment for non-cancerous gynaecological conditions such as fibroids and endometriosis.

Feel free to discuss any questions or concerns with your nurse or telephone us on: 0118 322 7181/8204.

What is goserelin acetate (Zoladex[®])?

Zoladex[®] is a hormonal therapy. It is a short term treatment (up to 6 months) that is used:

- to help shrink fibroids;
- to treat endometriosis;
- to thin the lining of the womb (endometrium);
- as part of some fertility treatment regimes.

What it is and how does it work?

Zoladex[®] is a gonadotrophin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonist. It blocks the hormones that normally stimulate your ovaries and stops them from producing oestrogen. It is the lack of oestrogen that causes fibroids / endometriotic deposits to shrink and prevents the development of the endometrium.

What are the benefits?

- Fibroids – this treatment often reduces the size and improves symptoms. Reducing the size can make surgery less technically challenging and reduce blood loss during surgery.
- Endometriosis – Zoladex[®] can reduce the extent of endometriotic deposits, which helps prior to surgery. It should provide symptom relief and can be useful in establishing if pelvic pain is related to ovarian function and therefore if removing the ovaries would be of benefit.

What are the side effects?

Most of the side effects relate to the artificial menopausal state brought about by the treatment.

These include:

- Hot flushes
- Sweats
- Vaginal inflammation / dryness
- Headache
- Reduced libido
- Emotional changeability
- Depression
- Sweating
- Acne
- Breast atrophy (shrinkage)
- Seborrhoea (excess sebum (oil) production)
- Peripheral oedema (swelling)

Does it provide contraception?

Although most women stop having periods during treatment, Zoladex® does not provide effective contraception, so you will need to continue with alternative methods.

Will it affect my fertility?

No, once the course has been completed your fertility will return to normal, depending on what other treatment you undergo.

Who cannot have it?

Women who are:

- Pregnant
- Trying to conceive
- Breastfeeding

How is it given?

Zoladex® is given by injection just under the skin. It is an implant about the size of a grain of rice that slowly dissolves, releasing the medication over 28 days.

What are the alternatives?

There are other drugs in the same family with no specific advantages or disadvantages to each.

Normally Zoladex® is used for a specific course with specific purpose. Although there are alternative treatment options for the various conditions, Zoladex® tends to be used in preparation for surgery rather than as a separate option. You can always discuss this further with your consultant / team.

Further information:

www.aboutzoladex.com/endometriosis.html

www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.1543.pdf

www.endometriosis-uk.org/sites/default/files/files/Information/Treatment-information-pack.pdf

www.nhs.uk/conditions/fibroids/treatment/

www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/patient-leaflets/long-term-pelvic-pain/

www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/patient-leaflets/endometriosis/

Visit the Trust website at www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Contact us

If, after you have gone home, you have any questions or concerns, please call the Emergency Gynaecology Clinic where the staff will be happy to help you.

Emergency Gynaecology Clinic Telephone Number: 0118 322 7181 (this number is available 24/7).

This document can be made available in other languages and large print upon request.

Department of Gynaecology, July 2018

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