



Your prostate cancer therapy

You have been prescribed Firmagon® (degarelix) because your hospital specialist considers it to be the most appropriate treatment for you. This leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have about your diagnosis of hormone-dependent prostate cancer and your treatment.

What is hormone-dependent prostate cancer?

Hormone-dependent prostate cancer is a type of cancer that grows using the testosterone in your body.

How does Firmagon® work?

Firmagon® is a gonadotrophin-releasing hormone (GnRH) antagonist. This means it acts by blocking the message from the brain that tells the testes to produce testosterone.

My GP or practice nurse wants me to stop Firmagon® and start another treatment with a different name. Is it the same?

Firmagon® acts in a distinct way from other hormone treatments for prostate cancer. If you are being offered a different therapy, you should always check with your hospital specialist that this is appropriate.

What does Firmagon® treatment involve?

- Firmagon® will be given by a healthcare professional during a short clinic visit to the hospital or your GP surgery
- Firmagon® is administered slowly by injection into the fat just under the skin of your abdomen. This will give you a continuous release of Firmagon® for a month
- The first time you are given Firmagon®, you will have two injections on the same day. After this, you will receive one injection every month for as long as it is working for you

STARTING DOSE		MAINTENANCE DOSES*		
Month	Month	Month	Month	Month
1	2	3	4	5
240mg INJECTION (2X120mg)	80mg INJECTION	80mg INJECTION	80mg INJECTION	80mg INJECTION

*Maintenance doses will continue for as long as treatment is required.

Your healthcare professional will talk to you about the benefits of regular physical activity, eating a balanced diet and stopping smoking. Speak to your GP or nurse before starting any exercise or diet plan.

How long will I need to be treated with Firmagon®?

Your healthcare team, and in particular your hospital specialist, will review your condition regularly and you should continue with your injections as long as you and they agree that it is working for you.

What are PSA tests for?

The PSA (prostate specific antigen) test is a blood test that will measure the amount of PSA in your blood, which will help your doctor or nurse to see how well you are responding to your treatment.

Please request the Firmagon® patient record book to help you and your healthcare team monitor your condition.

What if I miss an injection?

It is important that you continue to receive your monthly injections of Firmagon® as prescribed by your hospital specialist to ensure that your low testosterone levels are maintained. It is a good idea to set up your next appointment directly after your injection. If you miss or think you may have missed an injection, contact your specialist nurse straight away.

What may happen where I have been injected with Firmagon®?

- The injection affects people differently
- You may experience a skin reaction around the area where you have been injected
 - Sometimes the area around the injection site swells, hardens, darkens or reddens. These reactions are most often seen with your first dose and generally only last a few days
- Your doctor or nurse will vary the injection site each time to help minimise any discomfort

What can I do to take care of the injection site?



Keep the injection site clean



If possible wear comfortable loose-fitting clothing



Cooling methods, such as a cold compress may help



Make sure that belts or waistbands do not rub against the injection site



Avoid rubbing or squeezing the area

Your GP or nurse will be able to suggest ways to manage the injection site should pain persist.

What side effects might I experience with Firmagon®?

Very common side effects include: hot flushes, injection site pain and redness. Common side effects include: injection site swelling, node and hardness, chills, fever or influenza-like illness, trouble sleeping, tiredness, dizziness, headache, increased weight, nausea, diarrhoea, elevated levels of some liver enzymes, excessive sweating, rash, anaemia, musculoskeletal pain and discomfort, reduced size of testicles, breast swelling and impotence.

For further information, please see the patient information leaflet.

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard.

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

Support

For further information, please contact your local healthcare professional.

Your GP practice:

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Your hospital specialist nurse:

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FURTHER USEFUL MATERIAL, LINKS AND RESOURCES:

Prostate Cancer UK: www.prostatecanceruk.org

British Uro-oncology Group: www.bug.uk.com

British Association of Urological Surgeons: www.baus.org.uk

British Association of Urological Nurses: www.baun.co.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support: www.macmillan.org.uk

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-cancer

Tackle Prostate Cancer: www.tackleprostate.org