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## **INFORMATION ON BILASTINE (TRADE NAME: BLEXTEN)**

### **What is Bilastine?**

- Bilastine is a new, well-tolerated, non-sedating H1 receptor antihistamine. It is used for the treatment of allergic rhinitis as well as chronic idiopathic urticaria (hives). However, in the hair clinic, we frequently use off label for treating symptoms of itching and burning associated with scarring alopecia – namely frontal fibrosing alopecia and lichen planopilaris.
- Bilastine is a good anti-histamine in vitro. The affinity for the H1 receptor is 3 and 6 times higher than for cetirizine and fexofenadine, respectively. It belongs to the piperidine class of antihistamines as do loratadine, desloratadine, and fexofenadine

### **What is the dose?**

- 20 mg ONCE daily. We generally do not exceed this dose.

### **How should one take Bilastine?**

- It is recommended that Bilastine is taken at least one hour before and no sooner than two hours after a meal. This is because food and juice will slow the absorption. Bilastine does not increase the drowsiness caused by alcohol.

### **What are the side effects?**

- In clinical studies, side effects occur at about the same frequency with Bilastine as they do with placebo. 20 mg doses of Bilastine rarely have effects on drowsiness.
- The most common five adverse effects our patients experience are headache, drowsiness, dizziness, abdominal pain and fatigue.

# BILASTINE (TRADE NAME: BLEXTEN)

**Side effects that may be experienced in adults and adolescents are:**

**Common: may affect up to 1 in 10 people**

- headache
- drowsiness

**Uncommon: may affect up to 1 in 100 people**

- abnormal ECG heart tracing
- blood tests which show changes in the way the liver is working
- dizziness
- stomach pain
- tiredness
- increased appetite
- irregular heartbeat
- increased weight
- nausea (the feeling of being sick)
- anxiety
- dry or uncomfortable nose
- belly pain
- diarrhea
- gastritis (inflammation of the stomach wall)
- vertigo (a feeling of dizziness or spinning)
- feeling of weakness
- thirst
- dyspnea (difficulty in breathing )
- dry mouth
- indigestion
- itching
- cold sores (oral herpes)
- fever
- tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- difficulty in sleeping
- blood tests which show changes in the way kidney is working
- blood fats increased

**Who should not use Bilastine?**

We do not prescribe Blexten (Bilastine) to the following patient groups:

1. Children under 12
2. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.
3. Patients using certain medications including diltiazem, cyclosporine, ritonavir, rifampin and amiodarone
4. Patients who have a history of irregular heart rhythm, including torsade de pointes and congenital long QT syndromes. Blexten (Bilastine) has been associated rarely with QT prolongation

**Other than the main ingredient Bilastine, what other ingredients do the pills contain?**

- The pills contain colloidal anhydrous silica, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, sodium starch glycolate

