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INFORMATION ON BICALUTAMIDE FOR WOMEN

What is Bicalutamide & how does it work?

- Bicalutamide is an oral medication (pill) that is used “off label” for treating androgenetic alopecia in women. Generally, the use of bicalutamide is limited to post menopausal women but exceptions to exist.
- It is approved by the FDA for treating prostate cancer in men at doses of 150 mg daily.
- A popular trade name of Bicalutamide is known as “Casodex” and therefore you may hear the medication commonly referred to as Casodex
- Bicalutamide is prescribed for women’s hair loss by dermatologists around the world.
- The drug blocks the effects of the male hormone (androgen) and is said to be a pure non steroidal androgen receptor blocker. It is closely related to another antiandrogen called flutamide. We don’t use flutamide much any more.
- Women with genetic hair loss and frontal fibrosing alopecia may benefit from bicalutamide

Does Bicalutamide help with hair loss?

- Bicalutamide can be helpful at doses 12.5 mg to 50 mg 3 to 7 times per week.
- It is important to check Dr. Donovan’s recommendation. The use may not be daily and may not be the full pill.

How long does the drug need to be used?

- For women with genetic hair loss, Bicalutamide only works while it’s taken. It must be taken forever to maintain the benefits. If women with genetic hair loss decide to stop Bicalutamide, the benefits are lost in 6 months and hair density goes back to the way it was before starting the drug.
- For women with frontal fibrosing alopecia, Bicalutamide helps calm down or ‘inactive’ the disease. Unlike genetic hair loss, it may be possible for some women with frontal fibrosing alopecia to stop their Bicalutamide at some point and not lose further hair. This is assuming they do not have any androgenetic alopecia. If they do have androgenetic alopecia, the drug might need to be used forever.

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What are the side effects of Bicalutamide for women?

The following are side effects to be aware of :

- Mood changes (anxiety & depression)
- Decreased libido (sex drive)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Enlargement of breast tissue and sometimes breast tenderness
- Bicalutamide can not be used by pre-menopausal women who are planning pregnancy or may become pregnant. Bicalutamide can seriously harm a baby if a female user were to get pregnant
- Weight gain
- Skin Rashes
- Changes in Blood Counts
- Muscle pain (and increased muscle enzymes such as CK in the blood)
- Hair shedding
- Elevated liver enzymes (up to 11%)
- Swelling in the feet and fluid retention (3 %)
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (2 %)
- Abnormal uterine bleeding (very rare)

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Bicalutamide is prescribed by experienced doctors around the world for post-menopausal women with hair loss. Your pharmacist might not know this and may question why you are receiving this medication.
- You can not donate blood while taking Bicalutamide. If a pregnant woman were to need blood, the presence of Bicalutamide in the donated blood could harm her pregnancy.

Are blood tests needed when starting or while on Bicalutamide?

Yes. Baseline liver enzymes are needed before starting bicalutamide and then liver enzymes need to be checked at around month 2 and then 2 months after any dose change.

WHAT STUDIES CAN I REVIEW FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ?

Ismail et al. Safety of Oral Bicalutamide in female pattern hair loss: A retrospective review of 316 patients. J Am Acad Dermatol. Nov 2020

Fernandez-Nieto et al. Bicalutamide: A potential pure anti-androgens with Potential Benefit in Treating Female Androgenetic Alopecia. J Am Acad Dermatol. Nov 2020 in 435 patients. J Am Acad Dermatol Nov 2020

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BICALUTAMIDE CONSENT FORM FOR DR. DONOVAN'S PATIENTS

At Donovan Medical, it is very important to us that you understand the benefit as well as potential side effects. Please initial beside each of the following to indicate that you have reviewed these issues with Dr. Donovan. **I understand and acknowledge that :**

_____ I am a patient of Dr. Donovan and have had an appointment with him in the last 6 months

_____ Bicalutamide pills are 50 mg in each pill. I understand that Dr. Donovan may require me to only use this medication a few times per week and may ask that I break the pill.

_____ Bicalutamide may be associated with mood changes such as depression (approx. 1 % of users) and possibly other symptoms like anxiety and memory problems and 'brain fog'

_____ Bicalutamide may be associated with sexual side effects, including decreased libido.

_____ Antiandrogens have rarely been associated with permanent and long lasting sexual dysfunction in men. However, I understand that this has not been reported with bicalutamide in women to date.

_____ Bicalutamide may be associated with enlargement of breast tissue and breast tenderness

_____ Bicalutamide may be associated with weight gain in some users.

_____ Bicalutamide users should not donate blood

_____ Women of child bearing potential should never handle broken (crushed) Bicalutamide tablets

_____ Bicalutamide users should do regular self breast exams to check for lump. I understand that at present there is no definitive evidence to link Bicalutamide with breast cancer.

_____ Should I develop side effects from Bicalutamide I will contact Dr. Donovan. I understand that I will need to stop the medication if Dr Donovan advises me to stop.

_____ I have received a copy of the Bicalutamide Information Sheet (page 1-2).

_____ I understand that if I use bicalutamide I will require follow up from a dermatologist at least once every 9-12 months depending on my exact situation.

NAME

DATE (DAY/MONTH/YEAR)

SIGNATURE

PLEASE SEND MY SCRIPT TO:
