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INFORMATION ON DUTASTERIDE (AVODART) FOR WOMEN
(For Patients of Dr. Donovan's practice)

What is Dutasteride (Avodart) & how does it work?

- Dutasteride is an oral medication (pill) that is used for treating hair loss.
- It is approved by the FDA and by Health Canada for men with prostate enlargement. It is not formally approved for hair loss – however it is important to understand that a qualified physician can prescribe this medication for hair loss in what is termed an 'off-label' manner.
- A popular trade name of dutasteride is known as "Avodart" and therefore you may hear the medication commonly referred to as Avodart.
- Dutasteride is prescribed for women's hair loss by dermatologists around the world.
- Similar to Dutasteride, dutasteride reduces the levels of the hormone dihydrotestosterone (DHT).
- Women with genetic hair loss and frontal fibrosing alopecia benefit from reductions in the levels of DHT

Does Dutasteride help with hair loss?

- The 0.5 mg dose of dutasteride is helpful in several types of hair loss in post-menopausal women.

How long does the drug need to be used?

- For women with genetic hair loss, dutasteride only works while it's taken. It must be taken forever to maintain the benefits. If women with genetic hair loss stop dutasteride, the benefits are lost in 6-9 months and hair density goes back to the way it was before starting the drug.
- For women with frontal fibrosing alopecia, dutasteride helps calm down or 'inactive' the disease. Unlike genetic hair loss, it may be possible for women with frontal fibrosing alopecia to stop their dutasteride at some point and not lose further hair. The pill is therefore used in a more temporary manner (although this may be 2-10 years),

What are the side effects of Dutasteride (Avodart) for women?

Dutasteride has a longer “half-life” than finasteride. While this may sound complicated, it simply means that it takes longer for medicine to completely disappear from the body if a patient decides to stop the medication. For example, if finasteride is stopped, the medication will be completely out of the body within a matter of a few days. If dutasteride is stopped it will take a few months for the medication to completely be out of the body. This means that if a patient develops side effects on dutasteride, they may remain a bit longer than finasteride.

The following are side effects to be aware of :

- Mood changes (anxiety & depression) in 1:150
- Decreased libido (sex drive)
- Difficulty concentrating (rare)
- Enlargement of breast tissue and sometimes breast tenderness – rare
- Dutasteride cannot generally be used by pre-menopausal women. Dutasteride can seriously harm a baby if a female user were to get pregnant
- Weight gain
- Changes in Blood Counts
- Muscle pain (and increased muscle enzymes such as CK in the blood)
- Hair shedding
- Other side effects are possible

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Dutasteride is prescribed by 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 cannot donate blood while taking dutasteride. If a pregnant woman were to need blood, the presence of dutasteride in the donated blood could harm her pregnancy.

Dutasteride Consent Form

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 :**

_____ : Dutasteride pills are 0.5 mg in each pill. I understand that Dr. Donovan may require me to only use this medication a few times per week.

_____ : Dutasteride 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'

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

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

_____ : Dutasteride may be associated with enlargement of breast tissue and breast tenderness

_____ : Dutasteride may be associated with weight gain in some users.

_____ : Dutasteride users should not donate blood

_____ : Women of child bearing potential should not handle broken (crushed) Dutasteride tablets

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

_____ : Should I develop side effects from Dutasteride I will contact Dr. Donovan

_____ : I have received a copy of the Dutasteride Information Sheet (page 1).

NAME

DATE (DAY/MONTH/YEAR)

SIGNATURE

PLEASE SEND MY SCRIPT TO:

