



## **Jeff Donovan MD PhD FRCPC**

*Dermatologist, specializing in hair loss*

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### **INFORMATION ON AZITHROMYCIN**

#### **What is Azithromycin?**

- Azithromycin is an antibiotic
- It belongs to the family of so called macrolide antibiotics (which also includes erythromycin and clarithromycin)
- May be better tolerated and have more effective tissue penetration than other similar antibiotics such as erythromycin.
- Azithromycin be taken with or without food; however, azithromycin may be better tolerated if taken with food.

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

- For many hair diseases, the dose is 500 mg daily for three consecutive days and then repeated every two weeks.
- For other conditions the dose is 500 mg on the first day and then 250 mg on day 2, 3, 4 and 5.

#### **Who can not receive Azithromycin?**

Azithromycin is usually not prescribed by Dr. Donovan to patients with the following conditions:

- Individuals with liver problems
- Individuals with heart problems
- Individuals who are pregnant
- Individuals who are breast feeding.
- Individuals who are allergic to clarithromycin or erythromycin
- Individuals with myasthenia gravis
- Individuals with a family history of QT prolongation

## What are the side effects of Azithromycin?

Dr. Donovan will review with you the key side effects. These are important ones to be aware of:

- Diarrhea. All antibiotics have the potential to cause diarrhea. If you develop diarrhea on azithromycin, you must contact our office.
- Nausea
- Stomach pain
- Vomiting
  
- Irritation of the liver. This is not common.
  - Liver problems may cause the patient to present with nausea, upper stomach pain, itching, tired feeling, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).
  
- Irregular heart rhythms (from QT prolongation)
- Allergic reactions
- Sun sensitivity (some patients burn more easily)

## Are there any drugs that interact with Azithromycin?

Nelfinavir

Warfarin

Antacids

- Do not take antacids that contain aluminum or magnesium within 2 hours before or after you take azithromycin. This includes Acid Gone, Aldroxicon, Alternagel, Di-Gel, Gaviscon, Gelusil, Genaton, Maalox, Maldroxal, Milk of Magnesia, Mintox, Mylagen, Mylanta, Pepcid Complete, Rolaids, Rulox, and others. These antacids can make azithromycin less effective when taken at the same time.

