



For the Patient: Degarelix
Other names: **FIRMAGON®**

- **Degarelix** (deg" a rel' ix) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancer. Degarelix decreases testosterone (a male sex hormone). It is a clear liquid that is injected under the skin of the abdomen.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to degarelix before receiving degarelix.
- **Blood tests** may be taken regularly during treatment.
- It is important to **use** degarelix exactly as directed by your doctor. Try to adhere to the schedule recommended by your doctor. If your scheduled dose is changed by a few days, the medication will still be effective.
- Other drugs may **interact** with degarelix. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start or stop taking any other drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of degarelix.
- Degarelix may cause **sterility** in men. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with degarelix.
- Degarelix may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with degarelix. Tell your doctor right away if your partner becomes pregnant.
- **Store** degarelix in the original packaging, out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light, and moisture. Do not shake the vial.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with degarelix before you receive any treatment from them.

Side effects are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur. Tips to help manage the side effects are included.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
Nausea does not usually occur with degarelix.	

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Hot flashes (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth) may sometimes occur with degarelix.	If hot flashes are troublesome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people find it helpful to avoid alcohol, spicy food, and caffeine (coffee, tea, colas, chocolate). • Follow a regular exercise program. • Try staying in a cool environment. • Wear layers so that if you do experience a hot flash, the outer layers may be removed. • Ask your doctor for more advice if your hot flashes continue to bother you. There may be medications available.
Muscle or joint pain may sometimes occur.	You may take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.
Decreased libido (loss of sexual desire) may occur.	This may return to normal when you stop taking degarelix.
Impotence (loss of sexual ability) may occur.	This may return to normal when you stop taking degarelix.
Hair loss does not occur with degarelix.	
Bone loss (osteoporosis) may occur over time.	Refer to <i>Guidelines for the Prevention of Osteoporosis for Men with Prostate Cancer on Hormone Therapy</i> .*

***Please ask your chemotherapy nurse or pharmacist for a copy.**

SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, skin rash or itching, or breathing problems.
- Signs of a **stroke** such as sudden onset of severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in arm or leg.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, chest pressure, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing, swelling of feet or lower legs, or fainting.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.

