



**For the Patient:** Goserelin injection  
Other names: ZOLADEX®, ZOLADEX® LA

## BC Cancer Agency

- **Goserelin** (goe se' rel in) is a drug that is used to treat prostate cancer, breast cancer, and other cancers. In men, goserelin decreases testosterone (a male sex hormone). In women, goserelin decreases estrogen and progesterone (female sex hormones). Goserelin consists of one small rod that is injected under the skin.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to goserelin, buserelin, or leuprolide, before taking goserelin.
- It is important to **use** goserelin 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 goserelin. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of goserelin.
- Goserelin may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with goserelin.
- Goserelin may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with goserelin. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- **Store** the injection in the original packaging, out of the reach of children, at room temperature, and away from heat, light, and moisture.
- **Tell** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with goserelin 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
<b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<b>Nausea</b> does not usually occur with goserelin.	
<b>Increased bone pain</b> may occur for the first 1-2 weeks if your cancer has spread to your bones.	This should improve as your body adjusts to goserelin. You may take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.
<b>Hot flashes</b> (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth) may commonly occur when you first start taking goserelin.	If hot flashes are troublesome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some people find it helpful to avoid alcohol, spicy food, and caffeine (coffee, tea, colas, chocolate).</li> <li>• Follow a regular exercise program.</li> <li>• Try staying in a cool environment.</li> <li>• Wear layers so that if you do experience a hot flash, the outer layers may be removed.</li> <li>• Ask your doctor for more advice if your hot flashes continue to bother you. There may be medications available.</li> </ul>
<b>Tiredness</b> and lack of energy may commonly occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Your Bank of Energy Savings: How People with Cancer Can Handle Fatigue</i>.*</li> </ul>
<b>Impotence</b> (loss of sexual ability) may commonly occur.	Sexual ability may return when you stop taking goserelin.
<b>Decreased libido</b> (loss of sexual desire) may commonly occur.	Sexual desire may return when you stop taking goserelin.
<b>Headache</b> may commonly occur.	Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
<b>Weight changes</b> may rarely occur. A small amount of weight gain may occur.	To maintain your weight: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep active.</li> <li>• Modify your diet as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Sugar control</b> may be affected in diabetics. Some people may be at risk for developing problems with blood sugar over time.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic. Talk to your doctor if you feel an unusual degree of thirst and experience frequent urination, as these can be signs of high blood sugar.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<b>Hair loss is rare</b> with goserelin. If you lose hair, it will usually grow back once you stop treatment with goserelin. Colour and texture may change.	If hair loss is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>• Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes, and perms.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase in cholesterol or triglycerides</b> may rarely occur.	Discuss this with your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A history of heart disease, high blood pressure, or elevated triglycerides.</li> <li>• You may need to have your cholesterol and triglyceride levels checked a few months after starting goserelin.</li> </ul>
<b>Bone loss</b> happens gradually and normally with age, but may happen more quickly with this medication. Over time, your risk of breaking a bone may be higher.	Refer to <i>Patient Guidelines for the Prevention of Osteoporosis in Women</i> * or <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, or breathing problems.
- Signs of **heart or lung problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, chest pressure, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing, swelling of ankles, or fainting.
- For men: **Signs of an increase** in the size of the cancer in your prostate such as blood in urine, problems passing urine, sudden back or trunk pain, or weakness in your legs, especially during the first month of the treatment. This is also called a flare reaction.

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

- **Changes in eyesight.**
- Ringing in your ears or **hearing problems.**
- For women: Ongoing **menstrual flow** that occurs **after** three to four months of treatment.

#### **CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:**

- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, or heartburn.
- Uncontrolled constipation or diarrhea.
- Uncontrolled joint or muscle pain.
- Swelling of hands, feet or lower legs.

