Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: **Leuprolide injection**
Other names: ELIGARD®, LUPRON®, LUPRON DEPOT®

- **Leuprolide** (loo' proe lide) is a drug that is used to treat prostate cancer, breast cancer, and other cancers. In men, leuprolide decreases testosterone (a male sex hormone). In women, leuprolide decreases estrogen and progesterone (female sex hormones). Leuprolide may be a liquid that is injected under the skin or tiny particles injected into a muscle.

- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to leuprolide or goserelin, before taking leuprolide.

- It is important to **use** leuprolide 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 leuprolide. 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 leuprolide.

- Leuprolide may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with leuprolide.

- Leuprolide may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **a non-hormonal method of birth control** while being treated with leuprolide. 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. Store LUPRON® at room temperature, and away from heat, light, and moisture. Store ELIGARD® in fridge.

- **Tell** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with leuprolide before you receive any treatment from them.

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Developed: September 1994
Revised: 1 November 2026

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 leuprolide.	
Increased bone pain may occur for the first 1-2 weeks if your cancer has spread to your bones.	This should improve as your body adjusts to leuprolide. 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.
Hot flashes (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth) may commonly occur.	If hot flashes are troublesome: • 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 healthcare team for more advice if your hot flashes continue to bother you. There may be medications available.
Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.	• Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in *Your Bank of Energy Savings: How People with Cancer Can Handle Fatigue*.*
Impotence (loss of sexual ability) may commonly occur.	Sexual ability may return when you stop taking leuprolide.
Decreased libido (loss of sexual desire) may commonly occur.	Sexual desire may return when you stop taking leuprolide.
Headache may occur.	Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
Weight changes may occur. A small amount of weight gain may occur.	To maintain your weight: • Keep active. • Modify your diet as necessary.

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SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Sugar control may be affected in patients with diabetes. Some people may be at risk for developing problems with blood sugar over time.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you have diabetes. 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.
Hair loss is rare with leuprolide. If you lose hair, it will usually grow back once you stop treatment with leuprolide. Colour and texture may change.	If hair loss is a problem: *Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout.**
Increase in **cholesterol or triglycerides** (one of the types of fat in the blood) may rarely occur.	Tell your doctor if you have: • A history of heart disease. • High blood pressure. • High cholesterol or triglycerides. • You may need to have your cholesterol level checked a few months after starting goserelin.
Bone loss (osteoporosis) may rarely occur over time.	Refer to *Prevention of Osteoporosis in Women* * or *Prevention of Osteoporosis for Men with Prostate Cancer on Hormone Therapy** for more information.

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

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM 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.

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM 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.

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CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM 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.
- Excessive breast swelling or soreness.
- Redness, swelling, pain, or sores where the needle was placed.
- Skin rash or itching.
- Changes in appetite.
- Extreme tiredness, headache, depression, dizziness, irritability, difficulty sleeping.
- Vaginal dryness.
- For patients with diabetes: uncontrolled blood sugars.

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

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