

Patient information

Medication for lower urinary tract symptoms

You have been given this leaflet because you have been diagnosed with lower urinary tract symptoms, as you may have difficulty weeing or controlling your wee (urine). Your doctor may have prescribed one, or a mixture of these medications below to help with your symptoms. This leaflet outlines those medications and the most common side effects. If you have any queries please consult the doctor who gave you the medication or the Urology department.

Tamsulosin (also known as Flomax XL, Flomax relief)

- This medication helps to relax the muscle in the bladder which allows you to pass urine more effectively.
- When you first take tamsulosin you may feel dizzy or lightheaded - please sit down if you do experience this.
- Tamsulosin is usually taken first thing in the morning after breakfast.
- Tamsulosin comes in slow-release forms, also called modified release (or MR) or prolonged release (or XL). This means the drug is released gradually into your body.

Common side effects (occur in more than 1 in 100 people)

- Feeling dizzy: we suggest if you have problems with your blood pressure being low or getting dizzy when standing that tamsulosin may not be appropriate for you. Please tell your doctor.

- Problems when you ejaculate: such as a dry ejaculate, where you can still orgasm but the ejaculate goes back into your bladder instead of being expelled from the penis during ejaculation. You will find the ejaculate gets released when you next pass urine.

Uncommon side effects

- Bowel problems: constipation or diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting
- Headache
- Skin reactions: skin rash

Serious side effects

- Any shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, chest tightness or lip / tongue swelling please call 999 or go to the emergency department (ED)

Additional information

- Please tell your doctor if you are taking medication to lower your blood pressure. Tamsulosin can lower your blood pressure further and can make you feel faint if taking it with other medication.
- Tamsulosin should be avoided or used with caution if you are taking any of the other following medications:
 - Parkinson's disease medication like co-careldopa, levodopa
 - Baclofen (muscle relaxant) or nitrates (for chest pain)
 - Please ask your doctor if you are concerned about interactions with medication you are already taking

Finasteride

- This medication targets the prostate tissue that has caused the prostate to enlarge
- Over time this medication shrinks the prostate gland making it easier for you to pass urine more effectively
- Please be aware that this takes a number of months to achieve the maximal effect
- You take finasteride once a day. Ensure it is taken at the same time every day.

Common side effects (occur in more than 1 in 100 people)

- Losing interest in sex and difficulty getting or maintaining an erection
- Problems with ejaculating, such as little or no semen

Serious side effects (occur in less than 1 in 1,000 people)

Please speak to your doctor if you have:

- Any lumps, pain or swelling in your chest area or discharge from your nipples. Whilst there has been concern that finasteride can increase the risk of male breast cancer the latest evidence has suggested no increased risk. However, we still recommend you seek medical attention if you notice any breast changes.
- Low mood (depression) or thoughts of harming yourself.
- Any shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, chest tightness or lip / tongue swelling please call 999 or go to the emergency department (ED).

Additional information

- If your partner is pregnant, or you are planning a pregnancy, please use a condom whilst having sexual intercourse and on finasteride. This medicine can cause harm to an unborn baby.

- If you are having your PSA monitored regularly please make your doctor aware that you are on finasteride. The medication is likely to decrease your PSA which will affect the trend of the PSA result. By being aware of the finasteride the doctor will adjust for this.
- Very rarely people describe a 'post-finasteride syndrome', which is a group of symptoms listed above which can persist even when stopping finasteride. There has been no conclusive scientific evidence published on this syndrome, but it is important that you are aware of it when taking finasteride.

References

www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update gives a full summary of finasteride and the potential risk of male breast cancer.

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email info.gov@wsh.nhs.uk. This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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