

MAGNUS PHARMACEUTICALS

# Exemestane

Exemestane 25mg

**Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.**

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet.

## About

Exemestane is a steroidal suicide aromatase inhibitor. It is very similar in structure and action to formestane, although it is significantly more potent in comparison. As a class of drugs, aromatase inhibitors offer an anti-estrogenic effect by blocking the enzyme responsible for synthesizing estrogens. Exemestane is approved by the FDA for the treatment of breast cancer in women, specifically in post-menopausal patients whose cancer has progressed following therapy with tamoxifen. Male bodybuilders and athletes often use the drug for nonapproved purposes, namely to counter the estrogenic side effects associated with the use of aromatizable anabolic/androgenic steroids. This may include gynecomastia, fat buildup, and water retention. In some instances aromatase inhibitors may also assist this group with the loss of body fat and increases in muscular definition. Exemestane is one of the most potent aromatase inhibitors presently available. The most commonly cited data (found in the Aromasin packaging insert) reports a lowering of serum estrogen levels by 85% on average in clinical studies with women.

## Side effects

Common side effects associated with the use of an aromatase inhibitor include hot flashes, joint pain, weakness, fatigue, mood changes, depression, high blood pressure, swelling of the arms/legs, and headache. Aromatase inhibitors may also decrease bone mineral density, which may lead to osteoporosis and an increase in fractures in susceptible patients. Some individuals may also respond to the medication with gastrointestinal side effects including nausea and vomiting. Aromatase inhibitors can harm the development of an unborn fetus, and should never be taken or handled during pregnancy.

When taken by men (as an off-label use) to reduce estrogenicity during prolonged periods of steroid treatment, aromatase inhibitors may increase cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk by retarding some beneficial properties of estrogen on cholesterol values. Studies have demonstrated that when an aromatizable steroid such as testosterone enanthate is taken in conjunction with an aromatase inhibitor, suppression of HDL (good) cholesterol levels become significantly more pronounced. Since the estrogen receptor agonist/antagonist Nolvadex generally does not display the same anti-estrogenic (negative) effect on cholesterol values, it is usually favored over aromatase inhibitors for estrogen maintenance by male bodybuilders and athletes concerned with cardiovascular health.

## Administration

Exemestane is FDA approved for adjunctive treatment of postmenopausal women with estrogen-receptor positive early breast cancer with disease progression following tamoxifen. Therapy is initiated 2-3 years after tamoxifen has failed to elicit a desirable response, at which point

tamoxifen is discontinued. Treatment with exemestane is continued for 2-3 additional years, and is completed after 5 years of cumulative adjunctive drug therapy (tamoxifen and exemestane treatment combined). The dosage prescribed in all instances is one 25 mg tablet per day, taken after a meal.

When used to mitigate the estrogenic side effects of anabolic/androgenic steroid use or increase muscle definition, male athletes and bodybuilders will commonly take 12.5 mg to 25 mg of exemestane per day. In some instances a half of a tablet (12.5 mg) taken every other day is sufficient to prevent the onset of estrogenic side effects.