For the Patient: GUPNSAA

Non-Steroidal Treatment of Prostate Cancer

GU = **G**enito**U**rinary
P = **P**rostate
NSAA = **N**on-**S**teroidal **A**nti-**A**ndrogen

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What are these drugs used for?
- Flutamide (EUFLEX®), Nilutamide (ANANDRON®), and Bicalutamide (CASODEX®) are used to treat prostate cancer.

How do these drugs work?
- Flutamide, Nilutamide, and Bicalutamide block the effect of testosterone and stop the growth of the prostate cancer. These drugs are often used with another drug that lowers testosterone levels.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

How are these drugs given?
- **Bicalutamide** is given by mouth as a 50 mg tablet once daily.
- **Flutamide** is given by mouth as a 250 mg tablet that is taken 3 times a day.
- **Nilutamide** is given by mouth as a 150 mg tablet once daily.
- These medications can be taken with food or on an empty stomach.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember if it is within 12 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 12 hours since the missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times. Do not double the dose.

What will happen when I get my drugs?
- Blood tests may be done before the start of treatment and throughout treatment. The dose and timing of your medications may be changed based on the blood tests and/or other side effects you experience.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

Your doctor will review the risks of treatment and possible side effects with you before starting treatment.

Side effects that can occur with **FLUTAMIDE, NILUTAMIDE,** and **BICALUTAMIDE** 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
Hot flashes (sudden sweating and feelings of warmth) are common when you first start taking these medications. This usually improves as your body adjusts. Hot flashes are more common when these medications are taken with another drug that lowers testosterone levels.	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 doctor for more advice if your hot flashes continue to bother you. There may be medications available.
Breast swelling, soreness and/or leaking from the nipple may rarely occur. (Breast swelling/soreness is rare when bicalutamide is taken with a drug that lowers testosterone levels)	This will return to normal when you stop taking these medications.
Tiredness and lack of energy may sometimes occur.	Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.
Impotence (loss of sexual ability) and/or a change in sexual desire may commonly occur.	This will return to normal when you stop taking these medications.

Side effects for unique to BICALUTAMIDE are listed in the table below:

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Nausea and vomiting may occur with bicalutamide. This should go away as treatment continues. Most people have little or no nausea.	To help nausea: • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Constipation or diarrhea may occur.	To help constipation: • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day). To help diarrhea: • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Note: If lactose in milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the tablet may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® just before your bicalutamide dose.
Sugar control may be affected in diabetics.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
Hair loss is rare with bicalutamide. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with bicalutamide. Colour and texture may change.	• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush. • Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.

Side effects for unique to NILUTAMIDE are listed in the table below:

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Changes in vision commonly occur. It may take longer for your eyes to adjust to darkness. Colours may appear different.	• Wear sunglasses in bright sunlight. • Avoid driving or doing other activities that require you to have clear vision until you know how this medication affects you. • Talk to your doctor if your changes in vision bother you. • This will return to normal when you stop taking nilutamide.

Side effects for unique to FLUTAMIDE are listed in the table below:

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Your urine may be amber or yellow-green in colour.	Your urine will return to its normal colour when you stop taking flutamide.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Diarrhea may sometimes occur.	If diarrhea is a problem: • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods • **Note:** If lactose in milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the tablet may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® tablets just before your flutamide dose.
Your **skin may sunburn** more easily than usual.	• Avoid direct sunlight and tanning salons. • Wear a hat, long sleeves, and long pants or skirt outside on sunny days. • Wear a sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Apply liberally, 30 minutes before exposure. Reapply every 2 hours and after swimming. • Consult the *BC Health Guide* or your community pharmacist for more information.

INSTUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT:

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

- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- Signs of **lung problems** such as cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty in breathing.

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

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs, numbness or tingling in feet or hands, or blood in urine.

If you experience symptoms or changes in your body that have not been described above but worry you, or if any symptoms are severe, contact _____ at telephone number_____