



Anti-cancer treatment (hormonal): Letrozole (Femara®)

Pronounced: "LET-roe-zole"

How drug is given: By mouth

Purpose: Stops non-ovarian estrogen production in the body

How to take the drug

- Take with or without food.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not double dose.
- Try to take it at the same time every day.
- Check any supplements or herbs you are taking for estrogen or estrogen-like products. It is important to discuss the use of supplements or herbs with your cancer care team.

Storage and disposal

- Store at room temperature, away from heat and moisture.
- Keep this medicine in its original container, out of reach of children and pets.
- If you have unused oral chemotherapy pills or tablets, please return them to the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Do not flush down the toilet, dump in the sink, or throw away in the trash.

Things that may occur during treatment or within hours of treatment

- Hot flashes and/or sweats are common. As your body gets used to the drug, these may not bother you as much. Caffeine, spicy food, alcohol, and stress may cause these to get worse. Mild exercise may help.
- You may get a headache. Please talk to your cancer care team about what you can take for this.
- You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. This may develop over time and can occur in joints in both sides of your body at the same time, such as in both knees. This will go away when the drug is stopped. No damage is done to the joints. If these bother you, ask your cancer care team what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.
- Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.

- You may have vaginal dryness, which may cause discomfort during sex. Vaginal lubricants, such as KY jelly, Astro Glide, or Replens, may be helpful. Speak with your cancer care team for helpful options if these lubricants do not work.
- This drug may cause thinning and weakening of bones with long-term use. This can lead to brittle bones that break or fracture more easily, like in the case of a minor fall. If you have osteoporosis (bone loss), talk with your cancer team.
- This drug may cause a change in your cholesterol levels.
- You are at increased risk of blood clots. If you have pain, swelling, and/or warmth in one leg, or if you develop sudden shortness of breath, tell your cancer care team right away.

Sexual health and fertility concerns

- If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.
- It is not safe to take this medicine during pregnancy. It could harm an unborn baby.

Women

- To keep from getting pregnant, use a barrier form of effective birth control and keep using it for at least **3 weeks after you stop treatment**.
- Barrier methods of birth control prevent the sperm from reaching the egg. Discuss with your cancer team which type of barrier method is best for you. Some barrier methods are cervical caps, female/male condoms, and diaphragms with spermicides. Some are available over-the-counter; others must be prescribed.
- Women should not breast-feed while receiving this medicine and for at least 3 weeks after you stop treatment.

The information in this document includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed here may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you are taking other medications. Please speak with your cancer care team if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your cancer care team.

If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your cancer care team right away.