

Letrozole Information Sheet

Letrozole is a type of medication called an aromatase inhibitor. Aromatase is an enzyme that produces estrogen in the body. By inhibiting this enzyme, the body makes less estrogen for a short period of time. The decrease in estrogen causes the body to make more of the hormone (FSH) that stimulates the ovaries to make eggs. Several studies have noted that letrozole will stimulate ovulation. Because of its short half-life, it is unlikely to have a negative affect on your uterus or cervical mucus.

Side effects

Letrozole works by reducing estrogen production. Low estrogen can cause a woman to have symptoms. These symptoms, similar to those seen with clomiphene citrate, include:

- Hot flashes
- Headaches
- Breast tenderness
- Nausea
- Insomnia

Letrozole and birth defects

The labeling of Letrozole states that the medication may cause birth defects. Recently, Novartis-- the manufacturer of Letrozole, sent a notice to doctors warning that there are reported cases of birth defects in the children of women who received Letrozole while **pregnant**. They stated that of the 13 pregnant women who reported having taken Letrozole, 2 had children with birth defects.

It is important to note that you will only take Letrozole in the beginning of your cycle so that the medication, which is metabolized quickly, is out of your system by the time you are pregnant. There have been no reports of birth defects in patients that took Letrozole before pregnancy. A recent study compared the number of birth defects in patients who took Letrozole and clomiphene citrate. After studying over 900 babies, they found no increase in birth defects as a result of Letrozole.

Long-term health affects

Letrozole was originally developed to treat breast cancer. However, because of the short amount of time that you will be using it, it is unlikely to have any long-term health benefits. Likewise, it is unlikely to negatively impact your long-term health