



---

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Leuprolide and Norethindrone

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

## Brand Names: US

Lupaneta Pack [DSC]

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat endometriosis.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have any of these health problems: Liver disease or liver tumors.
- If you have unexplained vaginal bleeding.
- If you have ever had any of these health problems: Blood clots, breast cancer or other kind of cancer where hormones make it grow, heart attack, or stroke.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

## **What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?**

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Use care if you have risks for soft, brittle bones (osteoporosis). Some of these risks include drinking alcohol, smoking, taking steroids, taking drugs to treat seizures, or having family members with osteoporosis. Talk with your doctor about your risks of osteoporosis.
- Use care if you have risks for heart disease. Some of these risks include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high blood sugar or diabetes, being overweight, or tobacco use. Your risk may also be higher if you have family members who are overweight, smoke, or have had blood clots. Talk with your doctor about your risks for heart disease.
- Have your blood work and bone density checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- This drug may raise some hormone levels in your body during the first few weeks of taking it. Disease signs may get worse before getting better. Tell your doctor if you have any new signs or if your disease signs are worse for longer than a few weeks after starting this drug.
- A very bad pituitary gland problem (pituitary apoplexy) has rarely happened with this drug. Most of the time, this has happened within 2 weeks after the first dose. Call your doctor right away if you have a sudden headache, throwing up, passing out, mood changes, eye weakness, not able to move your eyes, or change in eyesight.

- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- If you smoke, talk with your doctor.
- Do not use longer than you have been told by the doctor.
- Most of the time, this drug stops you from having a period (menstrual bleeding). This is not a method of birth control. Use a non-hormone type of birth control like condoms to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.
- If you miss doses of this drug, bleeding between cycles can happen. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may affect being able to get pregnant. This effect goes back to normal when the drug is stopped. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant.
- A pregnancy test will be done to show that you are NOT pregnant before starting this drug. If you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

## **What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?**

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite,

upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

- Depression or other mood changes that are new or worse.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Eyesight changes or loss, bulging eyes, or change in how contact lenses feel.
- New or worse migraines.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.
- Vaginal bleeding that is not normal.
- Not able to pass urine.
- Pain when passing urine.
- Seizures.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Breast pain.
- Fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Sweating a lot.
- Memory problems or loss.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- This drug may cause weak bones. This may happen more often if used for a long time. This may raise the chance of broken bones. Call your doctor right away if you have bone pain.
- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of a blood clot like chest pain or pressure; coughing up blood; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or trouble speaking or swallowing.

## What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Pimples (acne).
- Hot flashes.
- Headache.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Weight gain.
- Breast soreness.
- Constipation, diarrhea, throwing up, or upset stomach.
- Gas.
- Lowered interest in sex.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Leg cramps.
- Hair loss.
- Irritation where the shot is given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at <https://www.fda.gov/medwatch>.

## **How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### **Leuprolide:**

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.
- Your doctor will give this drug.

### **Norethindrone:**

- Take with or without food. Take with food if it causes an upset stomach.

## **What do I do if I miss a dose?**

### **Leuprolide:**

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

### **Norethindrone:**

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

## **How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

### **Leuprolide:**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

### **Norethindrone:**

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

## **All products:**

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

## **General drug facts**

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

## **Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care

provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at <https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms>.

## Last Reviewed Date

2023-09-13

## Copyright

© 2024 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

Leuprolide and Norethindrone - Last updated on December 12, 2022

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center