

Background

During the COVID-19 pandemic, face to face healthcare appointments for high risk patients should be minimized where possible. The British Association of Urological Surgeons (BAUS) has a COVID-19 strategy for the interim management of prostate cancer patients¹. This strategy includes consideration of the use of the only **6 monthly** LHRH preparation, Triptorelin pamoate (Decapeptyl SR 22.5mg)² instead of the 1 month or the most commonly used 3 month LHRH alternatives.

The 6 monthly preparation is an option on the local BSW formulary. The BAUS guidance mentions migrating to a 6 month preparation and clinical trial data suggest no theoretical reason to expect a risk to any migration³.

This guidance is also supported by our local urologists at GWH/SFT/RUH.

Licensed indications for LHRH preparations, costs and potential savings:

For the most up to date licensing information and dosing schedules please refer to each products SmPC available on Electronic Medicines Compendium (eMC) (www.medicines.org.uk).

Drug	Goserelin		Leuprorelin acetate		Triptorelin			
	Zoladex® 3.6mg	Zoladex LA® 10.8mg	Prostap® SR DCS 3.75mg	Prostap® 3 DCS 11.25mg	Decapeptyl® SR 3mg	Gonapeptyl® Depot 3.75mg	Decapeptyl® SR 11.25mg	Decapeptyl® SR 22.5mg
Indications*	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4,5	1,3,4,5,6	7	1,3,4,5,6	1,3,4,5,6
Administration interval	4 weekly	12 weekly	Monthly	3-monthly	4 weekly	4 weekly	3 monthly	6 monthly
Form	Implant in prefilled syringe	Implant in prefilled syringe	Powder & solvent in prefilled syringe	Powder & solvent in prefilled syringe	Powder for suspension with diluent	Powder & solvent in prefilled syringes	Powder for suspension with diluent	Powder for suspension with diluent
Needle safety device	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Needle size	16 gauge	14 gauge	23 gauge	23 gauge	20 gauge	21 gauge	20 gauge	20 gauge
Injection route	s/c	s/c	s/c or IM	s/c	IM	s/c or IM	IM	IM
NHS list price (Oct 20)	£70	£235	£75.24	£225.72	£69	£81.69	£207	£414

*Indications:

1. *Metastatic prostate cancer*
 2. *Locally advanced prostate cancer, as an alternative to surgical castration*
 3. *As an adjuvant treatment to radiotherapy in patients with high-risk localised or locally advanced prostate cancer*
 4. *As neo-adjuvant treatment prior to radiotherapy in patients with high-risk localised or locally advanced prostate cancer*
 5. *As an adjuvant treatment to radical prostatectomy in patients with locally advanced prostate cancer at high risk of disease progression*
 6. *Locally advanced, non-metastatic prostate cancer, as an alternative to surgical castration*
 7. *Treatment of hormone dependent locally advanced or metastatic prostate cancer.*
- Ipsen, who manufacture Decapeptyl SR 22.5mg, estimate that for BSW CCG, if every patient currently receiving a monthly or 3-monthly LHRH analogue for prostate cancer is switched to the 6-monthly preparation, approximately **4000 appointments could be released and savings of £190,000 in prescription costs.**

Actions for practices:

- We'd request that your practice pharmacist (if you have one, if not a nurse or GP) immediately searches the prescribing records of the practice using the Ardens/TPP search facility to ensure that anyone who is high risk for COVID-19 and currently receiving a 1 month or 3 monthly LHRH analogue is reviewed to see if they can be switched to the 6-monthly Decapeptyl preparation instead.
- 6-monthly **triptorelin SR 22.5mg** should be used as first line GnRH analogue in the treatment of prostate cancer. The first dose should be a monthly preparation to ensure tolerance.
- Switch existing patients to triptorelin SR 22.5mg if appropriate.
- **Please note that subcutaneously administered GnRH analogues (goserelin or leuprorelin) may be preferable in anti-coagulated patients, rather than triptorelin.**

Resources for practices:

- The link to the online administration video can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2YDnhue>
- Local Ipsen representative, David Braunton can be contacted for further information: david.braunton@ipsen.com
- Patient information can be found here: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.5906.pdf>
- Contact details for local specialist advice:

Hospital	Contact details
Great Western Hospital Swindon	rupertbeck@nhs.net ; sianfletcher3@nhs.net ; 01793 646203 or 01793 605917
Royal United Hospital Bath	Use consultant connect
Salisbury Hospital	sft.urology@nhs.net

References:

- 1.) British Association of Urological Surgeons: COVID-19 strategy for the interim management of prostate cancer. https://www.cmcanceralliance.nhs.uk/application/files/2715/9534/0674/COVID-19_BAUS_Oncology_Prostate_final.pdf
- 2.) Electronic Medicines Compendium Decapeptyl SR 22.5mg (Ipsen Ltd) <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5906/smpc> (Accessed 9/10/2020)
- 3.) Cornford P, Jefferson K, Cole O & Gilbody J. Effects of Initiating or Switching to a Six-Monthly Triptorelin Formulation on Prostate Cancer Patient–Healthcare Interactions and Hospital Resource Use: a Real-World, Retrospective, Non-Interventional Study. *Oncol Ther* (2018) 6:173–187 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40487-018-0087-1>