

**Patient
Information**

Pioglitazone

Introduction

This leaflet provides information about pioglitazone medication and its use, including side effects.

It has been suggested that you try pioglitazone because it is considered an important part of the treatment for many types of hair and scalp disorders including lichen planopilaris and frontal fibrosing alopecia.

About pioglitazone and how it works

This medication is currently prescribed 'off label'. This means that it is being used for a condition it was not previously meant to treat and has been prescribed by the consultant only after careful consideration of other treatment options.

Pioglitazone is a medication usually used in the treatment of diabetes. Its use has also been found to have some benefit for people with scarring alopecia as there is a similarity in its causes to the diabetic pathway.

What is the dose of pioglitazone?

The general dose of pioglitazone is 15mg, once a day.

Possible side effects of pioglitazone

- Dizziness/headaches
- Increased risk of upper respiratory tract infections/sinusitis
- Abdominal pain/nausea/vomiting
- Weight gain/leg swelling (fluid retention can affect 1 in 20 patients)
- Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) can happen if pioglitazone is taken alongside other medicines for diabetes
- Vision changes and increased risk of fractures have been seen in patients with diabetes. There is no current research to suggest if it would be the same result in non-diabetic patients
- Cancer - you may have an increased risk of some types of cancer, particularly bladder cancer, when taking pioglitazone

Reference No.

GHPI1546_09_22

Department

Dermatology

Review due

September 2025

Patient Information

Other side effects are possible but many people take pioglitazone without any side effects. Please read the leaflet enclosed with this medication.

If you develop any side effects while taking pioglitazone, please contact Dr Takwale's secretary. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

Important points to remember

Pioglitazone increases the duration of ovulation in females, so it is important to make sure that you use adequate contraception while taking this medicine.

All oral medications carry the risk of affecting liver and kidney function. It is therefore important that we take blood samples before treatment starts so that we have a baseline value to which future blood test results can be compared. These blood tests will provide information about fasting blood sugar HbA1c and HgA1c values. Follow-up blood tests will be requested as needed.

Your weight will also be recorded and monitored.

Please read the patient information leaflet enclosed with this medication.

Contact information

Dr Takwale's Secretary

Tel: 0300 422 5396

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm

Content reviewed: September 2022