Hair Loss PGD

Hair Loss and Propecia - A Patient Guide

Your Pharmacist can supply Propecia for hair loss. Propecia tablets are normally only on prescription.

Propecia can stop and reverse most male hair loss. Your Pharmacist will decide if Propecia tablets are a suitable for your type of hair loss.

Treatment is a once daily tablet taken long-term, possibly for up to 5 years or longer. Propecia needs to be taken for at least 3 to 6 months to see how well it works.

One month or three months of tablets at a time are supplied and can be repeated when you run out.

Male Hair Loss

Most men have some thinning of the hair at the front, temples (at the sides of the front) and over the top of the scalp with age. This typical thinning of the hair is called male pattern hair loss. It can start in the late teens or twenties or thirties and can lead over time to noticeable and even complete hair loss.

Early and rapid male pattern hair loss usually runs in families. Young men who have this type of hair loss often see the same in other members of their family.

Male pattern hair loss is not a disease. There is no skin problem causing the hair loss. It is not a sign of a medical or hormonal disorder. Hair loss is a natural process, although in some men it takes places earlier and faster than in others.

Some men are distressed by early hair loss. Others are happy to adapt to their new look. Hair loss is, after all, natural.

Men who are concerned about early hair loss can become distressed by it. They can focus on hair loss and blame it for other more general problems. Some men just do not like the hair loss and would like to prevent it.

How effective is Propecia?

9 in 10 men taking Propecia continuously have more or the same amount of hair after five years. This is a good result. Men who take no treatment have only a 1 in 4 chance of the same outcome.

The best results of Propecia treatment are seen after two years, at which time hair growth is likely to be at its thickest.

Propecia is most effective for hair loss over the top of the scalp (vertex).

Propecia has NOT been proven to:

- Reverse a receding frontal hairline.
- Reverse hair loss which is ONLY in the temple regions (the area at the sides of the the front of the hair line).
- Restore hair to entirely bald areas.

Pharmacists supply Propecia only to men aged 18 to 50 yeard. Men over 50 can obtain a supply only if they are already taking it.

Studies on the effectiveness of Propecia for men outside 18 to 41 are limited.

How long to take Propecia?
Propecia needs to be taken for at least 3 to 6 months and then continued for up to 5 years.

Improvements made on Propecia are usually lost in 6 to 12 months after Propecia is stopped.

Tablets should be taken continuously, without breaks, to ensure maximum effectiveness.

How Does Propecia Work and Side-effects?

Propecia reduces the production around hair follicle of a naturally occurring chemical. This chemical, known as DHT (dihydrotestosterone), is found in higher than normal levels in men who have premature male pattern hair loss. Propecia lowers DHT levels and as a result hair falls out less and hair follicles become more active.

Propecia has very little activity in other parts of the body, apart from around hair follicles and, as a result, has few side-effects. In studies only 1.7 % of men (very few) stopped taking Propecia because of side effects. About 1.8% of men (very few) taking Propecia had reduced libido. This possible side effect decreases over time.

Your pharmacist will check for side-effects each time you are supplied with Propecia.

There are very few medications which cannot be taken at the same time as Propecia.

Propecia should not be taken by women or children.

Other hair loss treatments

Regaine (minoxidil topical) preparations applied regularly to the scalp stimulate circulation and slow down the rate male pattern hair loss. Apart from Propecia and Regaine there are no other medications with a proven benefit in treating male pattern hair loss.

Other types of hair loss

Propecia treats only male pattern hair loss. Other types of hair loss are less common. Other causes include, low thyroid levels, some skin conditions, such as psoriasis, rare fungal infections of the scalp and others.

Hair loss in irregular patches or thinning in unusual areas or with skin irritation should be reported to a doctor.

Your doctor

Your Pharmacists will give you a ‘Letter for your doctor’. You should keep your doctor informed about hair loss and treatment.

More Information

The NHS choices website has a good section on male pattern hair loss.

Propecia is supplied with a ‘Patient Information Leaflet’ which you must read.

For study data and detailed data Google ‘summary of product characteristics Propecia’.