

BPH MEDICATIONS: SIDE EFFECTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Alpha-Blockers: Tamsulosin (Flomax), Terazosin (Hytrin), Doxazosin (Cardura, Cardura XL), Alfuzosin (Uroxatral), Silodosin (Rapaflo)

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is a common condition affecting men. As men age the prostate enlarges and compresses the urethra which passes through the prostate. List above are medications used to treat BPH in men, and some women attempting to pass a ureteral calculus. Below is a list of common side effects and instructions. This is not a complete list of the side effects or instructions. ***When prescribed a new medication ask your pharmacist for the complete prescribing patient information and read it. Ask your pharmacist to check for interactions with your other medications. You may also obtain this information at [drugs.com](https://www.drugs.com).***

Alpha-blockers relax the muscles of the bladder neck and prostate and allow an easier urine flow. Alpha-blockers are also used to treat high blood pressure so if taken together there is an increased risk for low blood pressure and fainting.

Side effects that may occur with alpha-blockers include:

- **hypotension** (low blood pressure), dizziness and possible fainting especially when you first start taking it or when you start taking it again. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert. Avoid standing for long periods of time or becoming overheated during exercise and in hot weather. Avoid getting up too fast from a sitting or lying position, or you may feel dizzy. **Some people who are sensitive to the drug or take other blood pressure medications may pass out and lose consciousness with little provocation.**
- heart fibrillation (fast heartbeats or fluttering in your chest) or chest pain
- floppy iris syndrome (eye complication during cataract surgery). Tell eye doctor you are taking Flomax before any elective eye surgery
- abnormal ejaculation (nothing comes out of penis during orgasm)
- penis erection that is painful or lasts 4 hours or longer (priapism) (call your doctor or go to the emergency room if you experience this for 4 hours)
- fatigue or weakness
- swelling in hands, ankles or feet
- headache
- nausea, upset stomach
- allergic reactions
- Call your doctor if you experience any of these side effects

Instructions for taking alpha-blockers:

- This drug should be taken on an empty stomach approximately a half hour following the same meal each day
- If you take a drug for hypertension do not take it at the same time as the alpha-blocker. For instance, if you take your anti-hypertensive drug in the morning then take the alpha-blocker in the evening a half hour after dinner.
- Capsules should not be crushed or chewed.

5-alpha-reductase inhibitors: dutasteride (Avodart), finasteride (Proscar)

5-alpha-reductase inhibitors shrink the prostate and increase urine flow. It can take 3 to 6 months to begin working. In a small percentage (4%) of patients, 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors can also lead to erectile dysfunction.

Side effects that may occur with 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors include:

- allergic reactions
- breast or high-grade prostate cancer
- decreased sexual drive
- abnormal ejaculation, decreased volume of ejaculate
- erectile dysfunction
- gynecomastia (male breast enlargement)
- dizziness or lightheadedness
- Proscar may affect the PSA value, therefore, a new PSA baseline should be established at least six months after starting treatment and PSA monitored periodically thereafter
- Call your doctor if you experience any of these side effects

Warning: Proscar is only for men but women who are pregnant or may potentially be pregnant should not handle crushed or broken Proscar tablets because of the possibility of absorption and the subsequent potential risk to a male fetus.

Instructions for taking 5-alpha reductase inhibitors:

- Take one tablet by mouth each day preferably at the same time every day.
- If you forget to take Proscar, do not take an extra tablet. Just take the next tablet as usual.
- You may take Proscar with or without food.