NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex
Integrated Care Board

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Position statement on the choice of gonadorelin analogues (GnRH) in prostate cancer

Introduction

NICE clinical guidance NG131 Prostate cancer: diagnosis and management[1] does not recommend which gonadorelin analogue (GnRH) should be prescribed. The selection of a GnRH analogue should be decided by the licensed indications, evidence for use, side effect profile and cost considerations.

Licensed Indications[2] and cost[3]

For information on licensed indications and cost see appendix 1

Recommendations within SNEE

Within Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB) **Triptorelin** (Decapeptyl ® SR 3mg, 11.25mg and 22.5mg) **intramuscular injection** is the first choice gonadorelin analogue for **prostate cancer** following specialist urologist/oncologist initiation/recommendation.

Patients requiring a GnRH long term for prostate cancer

New patients

All new patients should be considered for triptorelin if hormonal treatment with a GnRH analogue is the management choice recommended by the specialist[4]. Patients newly initiated on GnRH analogues should be given Decapeptyl® SR 3mg (4 weekly administration) for the first dose in order to check that the product is tolerated prior to changing to a three or six-monthly preparation.

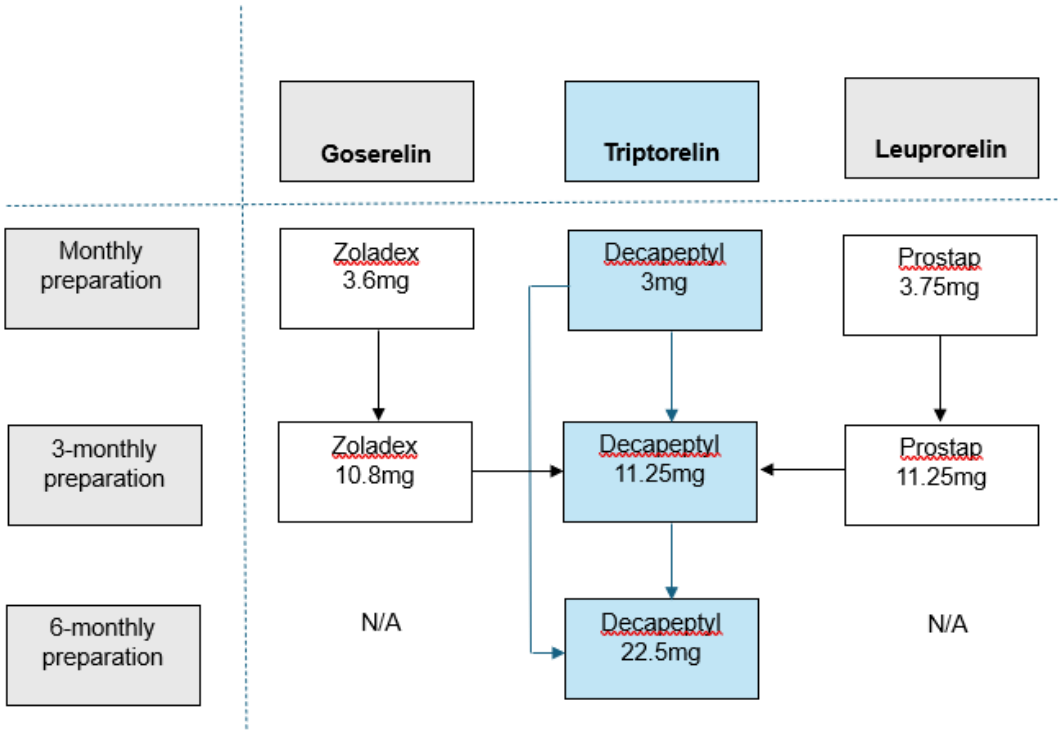
Existing patients

Patients with a stable PSA currently prescribed a 3 monthly dosing schedule can be switched to a Triptorelin 6 monthly (Decapeptyl® SR 22.5mg) within a Primary Care setting. Therapy should be switched when the next dose of GnRH analogue is due[4]. Figure 1 below details process for switching existing patients.[5]

Specialist will advise on the most suitable preparation for patients requiring a GnRH as adjuvant treatment to radiotherapy or radical prostatectomy or as neoadjuvant treatment prior to radiotherapy.

Figure 1

The preferred option (triptorelin) is highlighted in blue. Arrows represent switches, which can be undertaken by a GP based upon a specific request from the specialist team after discussions between the specialist team and the patient. At least one dose of a product is administered before a further switch is conducted. **Switches should only be conducted upon the advice of a consultant.**



Side effects, cautions and contraindications

- Information on cautions, contraindications and side effects can be found in the BNF[6].
- If a patient is at risk of adverse events from an IM injection e.g. due to anticoagulation a licensed product that can be administered by via the subcutaneous route is recommended.

Benefits

- Triptorelin 6 monthly intramuscular injection (Decapeptyl® SR 22.5mg) reduces the number of primary care appointments needed for administration
- 6 monthly injections are more convenient for the patient and aid patient compliance by reducing the frequency of appointments
- Triptorelin is administered by a smaller needle (20 gauge) than other GnRH minimising patient discomfort
- 6 monthly injections support the NHS carbon footprint reduction target – 2 fewer devices used each year and 2 fewer patient journeys for administration
- Triptorelin (Decapeptyl® SR 22.5mg) is significantly less expensive to the NHS than alternative GnRH analogues.

Training

Training on the correct administration is available from the manufacturers of triptorelin
https://www.decapeptyl.co.uk/practical-prescribing/

References

1) NICE clinical guidance NG131 Prostate cancer: diagnosis and management Published 9th May 2019 and last updated 15th December 2021 Overview | Prostate cancer: diagnosis and management | Guidance | NICE accessed April 2025
2) Summary of product characteristics Decapeptyl® SR, Prostap® 3 DCS and Zoladex® LA www.emc.org.uk accessed April 2025
3) NHS BSA Drug tariff April 2025 Tariff.book accessed April 2025
4) PrescQIPP Bulletin 257 April 2020 Luteinising hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) agonists in prostate cancer https://www.prescqipp.info/media/4931/257-lhrh-agonists-20.pdf
5) North Central London Joint Formulary Committee factsheet November 2021 FS_GnRH_prostateCa.pdf
6) BNF online www.bnf.org.uk/drugs/triptorelin accessed April 2025

Appendix 1

Drug and dose	Triptorelin 3mg	Triptorelin 11.25mg	Triptorelin 22.5mg	Goserelin 10.8mg	Leuprorelin 11.25mg
Brand name	Decapeptyl® SR)	Decapeptyl® SR)	Decapeptyl® SR)	Zoladex® LA	Prostap® 3 DCS
Form	Powder for suspension with diluent	Powder for suspension with diluent	Powder for suspension with diluent	Implant in prefilled syringe	Powder plus solvent in prefilled syringe
Injection frequency	4 weekly	3 monthly	6 monthly	12 weekly	3 monthly
Injection route	IM	IM	IM	SC	SC (prostate cancer)
Locally advanced, non-metastatic prostate cancer as an alternative to surgical castration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Metastatic prostate cancer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adjuvant treatment to radiotherapy in patients with high-risk localised or locally advanced prostate cancer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adjuvant treatment to radical prostatectomy in patients with locally advanced prostate cancer at risk of disease progression	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Neo-adjuvant treatment prior to radiotherapy in patients with high-risk localised or locally advanced prostate cancer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Medication cost per patient per annum	**£828**	**£828**	**£828**	**£1175**	**£902.88**