



Help in  
becoming  
pregnant

# Using Decapeptyl®

Information and practical guidance

**FERRING**

PHARMACEUTICALS

# Colophon

**Ferring B.V.**

Polarisavenue 130  
2132 JX Hoofddorp

Postbus 184  
2130 AD Hoofddorp

Email: [infoNL@ferring.com](mailto:infoNL@ferring.com)

Websites: [www.ferring.nl](http://www.ferring.nl), [www.decapeptyl.nl](http://www.decapeptyl.nl)

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Westzijde 22  
1506 EE Zaandam

Telephone: 075 - 6429 420

Website: [www.ariez.nl](http://www.ariez.nl)

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# Introduction

Hormones are substances in our bodies that can transmit a signal from one part of the body to another. By doing so, hormones control many important processes in our bodies. For example, there are hormones that ensure that the thyroid works properly. There are hormones that regulate fluid balance in our bodies and others that are involved in reproduction.

Due to increased knowledge of the effects of various hormones, it has become possible to replicate these substances and to use them as medicines for the treatment of certain conditions.

Decapeptyl® is a medicine that affects the production of the body's own hormones. This brochure explains how this medicine works in your situation and for what conditions doctors may prescribe this medicine.



# 1 Choosing Decapeptyl®

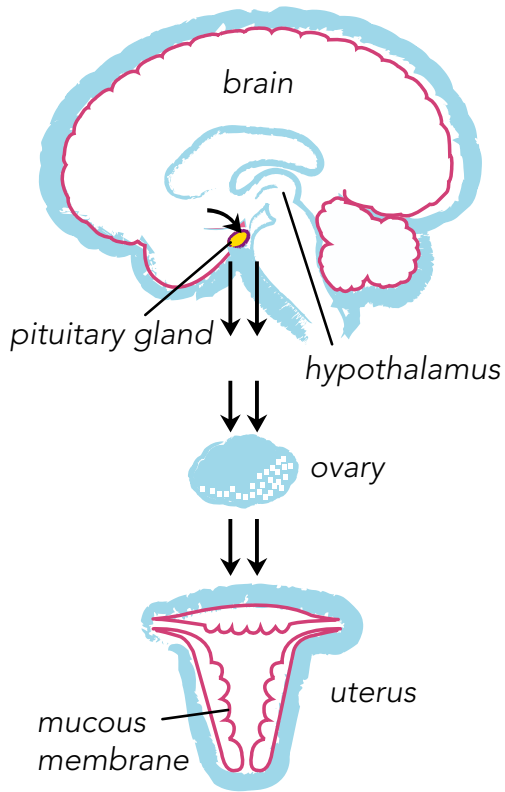
Decapeptyl® is available as a solution for daily injections under the skin (Decapeptyl® daily injection).

## 1.1

### How Decapeptyl® works

The active ingredient in Decapeptyl® is called triptorelin. This substance has almost exactly the same effect as the body's own hormone GnRH (or gonadorelin): it stimulates the pituitary gland (a gland at the base of the brain) to produce luteinising hormone (LH) and follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). LH and FSH are responsible for the production of the hormone oestrogen and progesterone. Oestrogen plays an important role in the development of female sexual characteristics, in the regulation of the menstrual cycle and in pregnancy.





In contrast to the natural substance GnRH, which is released in pulses from the hypothalamus (another gland in the brain), Decapeptyl® provides continuous stimulation of the pituitary gland. As a result, the pituitary becomes 'depleted': after the initial increase in concentrations of LH and FSH, concentrations in the blood eventually decrease. As a result, less oestrogen is released.

Decapeptyl® therefore reduces the production of the hormones LH and FSH and, as a consequence, less oestrogen.

## 1.2

### The applications of Decapeptyl® daily injection

#### **Inhibition of ovulation in artificial fertilisation treatments**

The application of Decapeptyl® in the form of daily subcutaneous injections is a part of artificial fertilisation techniques, in which the ovaries are stimulated with hormones. Examples of these are in vitro fertilisation (IVF) and intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) treatment, in which fertilisation takes place outside the body following the collection of as multiple mature eggs from the ovaries as possible. In a normal menstrual cycle, eggs mature one at a time. In both IVF and ICSI, the ovaries are stimulated with hormones to allow several eggs to mature at the same time to ultimately create several embryos. The most important hormone for the stimulation of the ovaries is FSH.

Normally, a signal is sent from the ovaries to the brain one week after the menstrual cycle begins, and as a result a large quantity of LH is created. This LH surge causes an egg to be released. This moment is called ovulation.

However, in order to be able to 'harvest' several mature eggs for IVF or ICSI treatment, spontaneous ovulation must not take place. Decapeptyl® is used in these procedures to suppress the body's own production of LH, thereby preventing spontaneous ovulation.

If the eggs in the follicles are sufficiently mature, ovulation can be artificially induced (with an injection of hCG - a long-acting LH hormone). Before ovulation takes place, however, the mature eggs are retrieved from the ovaries by means of a puncture. Following the fertilisation of the eggs outside the body, the best embryos are chosen and up to a maximum of two embryos are replaced into the uterus.

## 2 Using Decapeptyl®

The active ingredient of Decapeptyl®, triptorelin, is a protein. Proteins are broken down in the gastrointestinal tract. As a result, this medicine cannot be taken orally as a tablet, instead Decapeptyl® must be injected under the skin or into the gluteal muscles. Following injection, Decapeptyl® is absorbed into the blood in order to directly reach the organ where it has a specific effect, without the medicine being broken down in the gastrointestinal tract.

The doctor treating you will determine the number of injections. Decapeptyl® which is injected under the skin (subcutaneously) every day, can be administered by the user themselves. This leaflet provides advice on how to carry out subcutaneous injections effectively.

### 2.1

#### Administration Decapeptyl® daily injection

##### General

Remove the protective film and take the syringe out of the blister packaging. Hold the syringe upright with the grey protective cap at the top. Remove the grey protective cap. Push the plunger carefully in a little so that the largest air bubble disappears.







Decapeptyl® must be administered once a day by a subcutaneous injection in the lower abdomen. With your thumb and forefinger, lift a suitable fold of skin. Stick the needle completely into the fold of skin and slowly push the syringe until it is empty.

## 2.2

### Adverse events of Decapeptyl®

Potential adverse events of Decapeptyl® are stated in the instructions for use. We recommend that you read the instructions for use thoroughly. If you experience any of these adverse events severely, it is recommended that you see the doctor treating you or your pharmacist. You must always report any adverse events not stated in the instructions for

use to your doctor immediately. Here is a summary of the instructions for use.

Following the administration of Decapeptyl®, the injection site may be painful. Hot flushes are very common. The use of Decapeptyl® can be associated with depressive moods and irritability, muscle or joint pain, fatigue and sleep disorders. The injections may also cause itchiness, a rash or fever. This may indicate hypersensitivity to Decapeptyl®.

The most significant or most common adverse events of Decapeptyl® are:

- perspiration;
- dryness of the vagina and/or pain during sexual intercourse;
- breakthrough bleeding;
- reduced sexual feelings;
- mood swings.

## 3 Answers to frequently asked questions

### **How long should I use Decapeptyl®?**

Using Decapeptyl® prior to or during artificial fertilisation techniques using hormone stimulation usually continues until the day on which the eggs are sufficiently grown and final maturation of the eggs is achieved with an injection of an agent with LH activity, e.g. a substance containing hCG. If you are unsure, please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

### **What should I do if I forget to inject Decapeptyl®?**

Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed dose. If you forget to take Decapeptyl®, please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

### **What can I do to avoid pain in the injection area?**

Change the injection area regularly. The injections can be administered to the upper legs or the navel.

### **How should I store Decapeptyl®?**

Store Decapeptyl® in the refrigerator (2°C to 8°C) in its original packaging. Decapeptyl® must not be frozen. As with all medicines, keep Decapeptyl® out of the sight and reach of children.

*For further information about Decapeptyl®, please read the instructions for use or consult your doctor or pharmacist.*

# 4

## Useful websites

### All websites are in the Dutch language

#### [www.decapeptyl.nl](http://www.decapeptyl.nl)

You can find the Decapeptyl® leaflet and this leaflet here as a pdf. On this site, you can also watch a video giving you instructions on how to inject the Decapeptyl® solution.

#### [www.hulpbijzwangerworden.nl](http://www.hulpbijzwangerworden.nl)

Website with specific information about help in getting pregnant.

#### [www.freya.nl](http://www.freya.nl)

Website of the patient association for people with fertility problems.

#### [www.nvog.nl](http://www.nvog.nl)

The website of the Dutch Association of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

#### [www.vruchtbaarheid.startpagina.nl](http://www.vruchtbaarheid.startpagina.nl)

Home page about fertility.



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