

*Editor's note: This English translation was done by a third party. The original document can be accessed [here](#).*

## **Risks of taking finasteride 1 mg**

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During your first consultation about hair loss, it is important to talk to your doctor about your complete medical history (including physical and mental illnesses, in particular anxiety disorders, depression, etc.), any treatments you are taking, and your current state of health, especially your psychological health. This discussion time should also allow you to ask any questions you deem useful.

Indeed, reporting any psychological difficulties is important because:

- on one hand, hair loss can have an origin other than androgenetic, in particular in a young person. This baldness can, for example, be linked to psychological stress (school exams, family or professional worries, etc.), deficiencies (iron, vitamins, etc.), certain illnesses, or the taking of certain medications. In these situations, finasteride 1 mg would be useless and potentially expose you to adverse effects, with no effect on your hair loss;
- on the other hand, finasteride 1 mg can cause undesirable effects, in particular psychological ones (anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts likely to lead to suicide) and therefore aggravate existing problems.

In addition, if you are planning to have a child in the coming months, remember to inform your doctor about the possible impact of finasteride on fertility.

Before starting treatment, we recommend that you discuss with your doctor:

- the benefits you might expect from treatment with finasteride 1 mg, and the potential risks of taking this medicine;
- precautions to follow;
- what to do in the event of the appearance of adverse reactions.

Your doctor may suggest that you have a scalp examination (trichogramma).

Note that due to the lack of data concerning the combination of finasteride and topical minoxidil, this combination is not recommended in the treatment of androgenetic alopecia.

## **What to know and what to do**

It is important to remain vigilant for the appearance of worrying/unusual signs, even if they seem trivial to you or you are embarrassed to talk about them. Do not hesitate to discuss any such signs with your doctor at each follow-up consultation of your treatment. He will be able to provide you with valuable advice, or refer you to a specialist if he deems it useful.

It is also recommended that you inform your relatives that you are taking finasteride, inform them of possible adverse reactions, and to ask them to alert you if they observe any changes in your behavior.

In the event of a change in your mood (feelings of sadness, anxiety, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, etc.), stop the treatment yourself and consult your doctor.

In the event of the appearance of sexual problems or any other undesirable side effect, report it to your doctor as soon as possible. In such cases, you can discuss with him again whether he advises you to continue treatment or stopping it. There is no risk in stopping treatment on your own initiative.

If you experience swelling of the lips, face, tongue or throat; or difficulty swallowing or breathing, you should stop taking the medicine and contact emergency services immediately, as this may be a serious allergic reaction.

Essential information on the risk of occurrence of certain adverse reactions associated with the use of finasteride, such as psychological and/or sexual function disorders, as well as the action to be taken in the event of the appearance of these adverse reactions, have been compiled in a document for the attention of men treated with finasteride for hair loss, or for whom a prescription is being considered.

This document was first developed at the end of 2019.

The adverse reactions of finasteride can merge and appear at any time: at the start of treatment, during treatment or after stopping treatment.

Among these undesirable effects, we would like particular attention paid to sexual and psychological disorders.

### **Sexual disorders**

Patients have reported sexual disorders when using finasteride 1 mg. These may include erection disorders, ejaculation disorders such as a decrease in the volume of semen, testicular pain, a decrease in libido, as well as male infertility problems and/or poor semen quality.

### **Psychiatric troubles**

Patients have also reported mental disorders, including anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts that could lead to suicide. Symptoms of depression may include constant sadness, depression, loss of interest and pleasure, difficulty concentrating and remembering, reduced energy or fatigue (abnormal or even intense) and sleep disorders.

All of these disorders can have an impact on social and professional life. Sexual and psychological disorders may persist after stopping treatment for an indefinite period.

### **Other disorders**

Finasteride 1 mg may cause allergic reactions that manifest as swelling of the lips, face, tongue or throat, difficulty swallowing, skin rash (hives), itching, and difficulty breathing. Patients

experiencing such symptoms should stop taking their medication and contact their doctor immediately.

**Finasteride can also cause:**

- the appearance of blood in the semen (hematospermia);
- increased tenderness and volume of the breasts (gynecomastia), as well as nipple discharge.

Patients should promptly report these symptoms to their doctor as they may be a sign of a serious illness such as breast cancer.