



**Northern Ireland
Cancer Network**

RALOXIFENE

**FOR WOMEN WITH A FAMILY HISTORY OF
BREAST CANCER DECIDING WHETHER TO
TAKE RALOXIFENE FOR RISK REDUCTION**

 **Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust**  **Northern Health
and Social Care Trust**  **South Eastern Health
and Social Care Trust**

 **Southern Health
and Social Care Trust**  **Western Health
and Social Care Trust**

What is raloxifene?

Raloxifene is a tablet that is used to prevent breast cancer in women who are at moderate or high risk of developing the disease.

Raloxifene works by blocking the action of oestrogen. Oestrogen is a female hormone that is known to increase the likelihood of a woman developing a certain type of breast cancer, known as oestrogen receptor positive (or ER+) breast cancer.

Should I consider taking raloxifene?

You can be prescribed raloxifene if you are at moderate or high risk of breast cancer. If breast cancer runs in your family, you may be at increased risk.

Raloxifene is a tablet that is taken once a day for five years. If you wish to consider taking raloxifene it is important that you are aware of the benefits of treatment and the possible side effects.

What are the potential benefits?

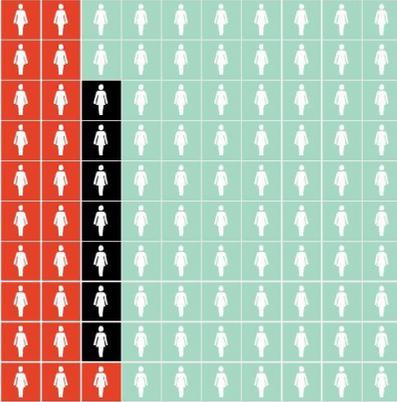
Raloxifene can reduce the risk of breast cancer by up to 30% if used for five years, and by about 60% if used for eight years.

Raloxifene reduces blood cholesterol and increases bone strength.

Raloxifene does not increase the risk of womb cancer.

What are the potential risks?

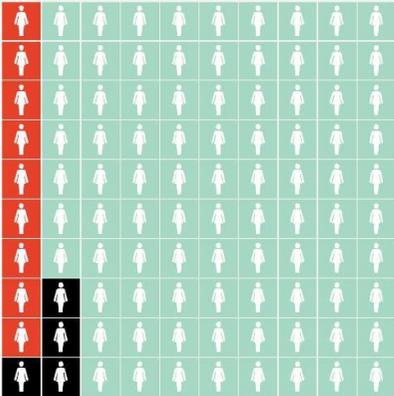
Although many women will not experience side effects when taking raloxifene, we also know that some women will be affected.



Hot Flashes

Out of 100 women at increased risk of breast cancer, 21 women will experience hot flashes.

If the same 100 women take raloxifene, an additional 7 women will experience hot flashes.



Leg Cramps

Out of 100 women at increased risk of breast cancer, 9 women will experience leg cramps.

If the same 100 women take raloxifene, an additional 4 women will experience leg cramps.

Uncommon side effects include:

Leg muscle cramps
Swollen ankles

Rare side effects include:

Increased risk of stroke
Increased risk of blood
Clots in legs and/or
lungs

Effectiveness

Trials of raloxifene have been on-going since the 1980s. The results of these trials have shown a reduction in the risk of breast cancer by approximately 30%. Women who take raloxifene for about eight years have about a 60% reduction in risk. This result has led to the NHS deciding that raloxifene can be prescribed to prevent breast cancer.

Where do I go from here?

If you are at high or moderate risk of breast cancer and want more information about raloxifene, you should discuss this with your doctor or local family history clinic.

Your doctor can tell you more about your risk of breast cancer and ways you can help to reduce your risk. Although having a family history of breast cancer is a significant risk factor. It is important to lead a healthy lifestyle. A healthy diet and regular exercise can help to reduce your breast cancer risk as well as your risk of other diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke

Useful Contacts

Health and Social Care Trust	Belfast	☎028 9504 1018
	Northern	☎ 028 9442 4874
	South Eastern	☎028 9055 0499
	Southern	☎028 3861 2086
	Western	☎028 7161 1187
Action Cancer	💻 www.actioncancer.org ☎ 02890 803344	
BRCA LINK NI	💻 www.brcani.co.uk ✉ info@brcani.co.uk	