

## **Possible behaviour change with your treatment**

These medications reduce the production of prolactin by increasing the release of dopamine in the brain. Dopamine also plays a key role in the part of the brain that controls pleasure and motivation. Although very uncommon, this medication may cause a change in behaviour.

**You should therefore tell a doctor if you or a friend or relative notice that you are behaving in ways that are unusual for you and you cannot resist the impulse to carry out certain activities that could harm yourself or others.**


These may include:

- **A strong impulse to gamble excessively**
- **Excessive internet use**
- **Increased sex drive or a change in sexual behaviour**

- **Binge eating (large amounts of food in a short time) or compulsive eating (more food than is normal and more than is needed to satisfy your hunger)**
- **Uncontrollable excessive shopping or spending**

You may be more at risk if you have a previous history of any of these. However, this is still a rare occurrence.

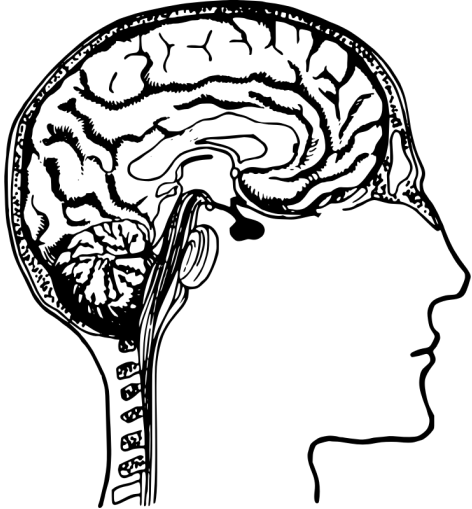
Because people suffering with these side effects may not recognise them we would advise that you tell at least two people close to you that you are taking this medication, for example, a family member, close friend or work colleague. If they notice changes they should encourage you to seek help from your doctor.



**eced**  
**Edinburgh Centre for  
Endocrinology and  
Diabetes**

---

## **Treatment of Prolactinoma**



## What is a prolactinoma?

A prolactinoma is a small benign growth in the pituitary gland in the brain. The pituitary gland is responsible for producing hormones which act as 'chemical messengers' throughout the body.

If you have prolactinoma this gland over-produces a hormone called prolactin. This excess of prolactin can cause a variety of symptoms:

In women

- Irregular or no periods
- Reduced fertility
- Milk leakage from the breasts

In Men

- Erectile dysfunction
- Reduced fertility
- Breast enlargement

Occasionally large tumours can cause pressure in the brain leading to headaches or visual disturbance.

## How are prolactinomas treated?

Tablet medications such as Cabergoline, Bromocriptine and Quinagolide are all effective at lowering prolactin levels and reducing tumour size in over 90% of patients.

Occasionally if medications do not work or the prolactinoma is large then surgery may be an option.

### Duration of treatment

Usually at least **2 years**. These medications are safe to take for many years.

Stopping these medications can often lead to recurrence of high prolactin levels and as it is not possible to accurately predict who will experience recurrence, close follow-up and repeat blood tests will be necessary after stopping treatment.

You should inform your doctor if you are planning to become **pregnant** or become pregnant whilst on medication.

## Medication side effects

Most people tolerate these medications well.

Possible side effects can include:

- Abdominal pain
- Nausea
- Heartburn/Indigestion
- Constipation or Diarrhoea
- Headache
- Dizziness

To minimise these side effects medication should be taken with food.

If you are prescribed Cabergoline or Bromocriptine, your doctor will consider performing an ultrasound scan of your heart (echocardiogram). This is because in older people with Parkinson's disease, these medications have rarely been reported to cause heart valve abnormalities. These abnormalities have not been reported in patients treated with much lower doses for prolactinoma. However, it is sometimes recommended that we perform the heart scan just to check all is well.