Anastrozole: pharmacological and clinical profile in postmenopausal women with breast cancer

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A significant proportion of breast cancers are estrogen-dependent and are therefore amenable to endocrine therapy. Although tamoxifen has been the mainstream of endocrine treatment for over 20 years, new agents have entered the clinic, which have potentially superior activity and an improved safety profile. The development of orally-active, potent and selective third-line aromatase inhibitors represents a major advantage in the management of hormone-sensitive breast cancer. Anastrozole (Arimidex) was the first of these agents to become available and is currently widely indicated for both first- and second-line treatment for postmenopausal women with breast cancer. This review focuses on the biochemical properties and clinical efficacy of anastrozole, providing an overview of the current clinical status and possible future applications.

type: journal paper/review (English)
date of publishing: 8-2001
journal title: Expert review of anticancer therapy (1/2)
ISSN print: 1473-7140
pages: 169-76