

## Aromatase Inhibitor Fact Sheet

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### **Aromatase inhibitors (AIs): an important advance in breast cancer treatment**

- One of the most important advances in hormonal therapy for breast cancer has been the demonstration that the AIs are more effective than tamoxifen in the treatment of early breast cancer.
- The advantage of AIs over tamoxifen in reducing the risk of breast cancer recurrence in the post-surgery (adjuvant) setting is well-established, according to the 2007 St. Gallen guidelines.
- AIs are increasingly replacing tamoxifen, the previous gold-standard post-surgery treatment for postmenopausal women with hormone-sensitive early breast cancer.
- The goal of an AI is to deprive cancer cells of estrogen, thus helping to slow or even halt the growth of the tumor.

### **Leading professional organizations recommend the use of aromatase inhibitors**

- Based on several studies, many doctors recommend AIs as the first choice for breast cancer adjuvant hormonal therapy.
- Both the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) technology assessment panel and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) breast cancer treatment guidelines recommend that AIs be part of the optimal adjuvant treatment of postmenopausal women with hormone-sensitive breast cancer.
- In the September 2005 online issue of the *Annals of Oncology* and the October issue of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, the International Consensus on the Primary Therapy of Early Breast Cancer acknowledged recent studies supporting use of AIs in the initial adjuvant and extended adjuvant settings.

### **Novartis, a leader in aromatase inhibitor therapy**

- Novartis has been a leader in researching and developing AIs for more than 30 years.
- Since the 1970s, Novartis (and its predecessor Ciba-Geigy) have researched or introduced around the world four AIs: aminoglutethimide, formestane, fadrozole and letrozole.

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