

CancerCare Manitoba anastrozole (Arimidex) Follow-Up Guidelines

- 1) This medication is generally very well-tolerated.
- 2) Potential side effects include hot flashes, arthralgias/myalgias, vaginal dryness, nausea/emesis, diarrhea, headaches, asthenia and rash.
- 3) This drug is associated with an increased incidence of osteopenia/osteoporosis and fractures.
- 4) Bone mineral density should be monitored annually and if there is evidence of bone loss, then patient should be appropriately treated with a bisphosphonate.
- 5) Meanwhile, she should take calcium and vitamin D. It is unclear if cholesterol levels are altered but these should also be monitored. There is a 1% risk of thromboembolism.
- 6) Anastrozole is taken as 1 mg od for five years, and then discontinued. There is currently no evidence of benefit for longer use.

Please ask the patient to contact our clinic, once the anastrozole is finished, in order to discuss further options for breast cancer therapy.