



# GROWTH HORMONE DEFICIENCY

Saizen® (somatropin) is used in the treatment of growth hormone deficiency (GHD). This booklet is intended for the parent or carer of a patient with GHD.

**MyTreatment**  
**MySaizen®**  
with easypod™



## What is it?

Growth hormone is really important. It helps us grow and develop muscles and strong bones. It's made by a part of the body called the pituitary gland, which is not much bigger than a pea and is found right at the bottom of the brain, just behind the eyes.

We produce different amounts of growth hormone at different stages of our lives – it peaks in our teenage years, which explains why many people grow very quickly at this time. When we reach adulthood, production dips and is only around a quarter of the amount made during our teens.

Growth hormone deficiency (GHD) happens when the body doesn't produce enough growth hormone to grow at the usual rate.

## Why does it happen?

There are lots of possible reasons why your child may have GHD, but most people with GHD are simply born with it and it's only identified when they don't grow as fast as other children. Sometimes people develop GHD if they have had an illness or an operation that causes damage to their pituitary gland.

## How can it be treated?

GHD can be treated with growth hormone therapy. The duration of growth hormone treatment depends on how old your child is when they start having hormone therapy.

Most children with GHD take growth hormone until they reach their natural adult height, which can be for several years. Some adults also continue to take growth hormone to help their bodies stay healthy.

Depending on your child's condition and when they were told they had it, treatment with growth hormone can last for several years. Because your child will keep growing until they are an adult, it is important they take their treatment as their doctor has told them until they have finished growing. In some cases they may need to continue taking a smaller amount when they are an adult as growth hormone is still needed for essential body functions. Their doctor will decide if this is necessary when they have finished growing.

## What happens next? Saizen® treatment

Your child's doctor has prescribed a medicine called Saizen®, which is a copy of the growth hormone produced naturally by the body. This will help their body grow as it should, if it's taken as often as advised.

## Lifestyle advice

Finding ways of encouraging your child to eat a variety of healthy foods will help them respond positively to growth hormone therapy. It's also important for them to get regular exercise and plenty of sleep.

## Managing growth hormone treatment

It's important that your child takes their treatment regularly, usually just before they go to bed. This is because the body normally releases growth hormone during the night. Your child may eventually feel confident enough to administer their own medication. Initially though, they may need your help and support. Both you and your teen will receive training from your nurse on how to administer the medication correctly.

## Reporting of side effects:

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard) In the Republic of Ireland, side effects can be reported online at [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie)

*By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.*