

MEDICATION INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR

METHOTREXATE

FOR INTRAVENOUS ADMINISTRATION



This leaflet should be used in conjunction with the complete consumer medicine information (CMI) which is available from any pharmacy.

This leaflet contains information about Methotrexate including details of known side effects. It does not include every possible side effect.

The type and severity of side effects experienced differs for each child. Some side effects are minor and easily treated at home. However, others may be more serious and require prompt medical assessment. Side effects from treatment are routinely monitored with blood tests and clinical examination. If you have any questions about side effects during treatment, please speak to your doctor. Also, if your child experiences any problems or side effects during treatment, please contact your doctor, clinical nurse consultant/coordinator or pharmacy staff for advice.

OTHER NAMES

- MTX

PRESENTATION

- A clear, yellow to orange liquid
- Drawn up in a syringe or diluted in a bag of fluid

ADMINISTRATION

- Intravenous injection
- Intravenous infusion

SIDE EFFECTS *Continued overleaf*

Common

IMMEDIATE (within 1-2 days of receiving drug)	DELAYED (within 1-2 weeks of receiving drug)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nausea and vomiting• High levels of liver enzymes in the blood• Increased risk of sunburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mucositis (inflammation or ulceration of the mouth and gut)• Decrease in blood count (with high doses)

Less common

- Skin rash or itchy skin
- Mild headaches or dizziness
- Decrease in kidney function

SIDE EFFECTS (CONT.)

Rare

- Allergic reactions which may be life-threatening. Symptoms of a severe reaction may include skin rash or hives, swelling or tingling of the lips and face, difficulty breathing and low blood pressure which may lead to collapse. Seek medical attention **immediately** if any of the above symptoms occur.
- Severe peeling, redness and tenderness of the skin (even without sun exposure)
- Darkening of the skin
- Changes to the white matter of the brain
- Decreased bone density
- Neurotoxicity
- Lung damage (very rare)
- Liver damage (very rare)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Exposure to sunlight during methotrexate treatment may lead to severe sunburn. It is very important to avoid excessive sun exposure, to wear sun-protective clothing, and to use a high SPF sunscreen.
- Paracetamol is safe to use for short-term treatment of pain and fever. Avoid the use of anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, naproxen (Naprogesic®), mefenamic acid (Ponstan®) or ibuprofen (Nurofen®, Brufen®, Actiprofen, ACT-3®, Rafen®, Tri-Profen®).
- Keep ALL medication out of the reach of children.

HIGH DOSE THERAPY

- Folinic acid is used to prevent or lessen side-effects.
- Intravenous fluids and folinic acid are continued until the amount of methotrexate in the blood reaches a safe level.
- Co-trimoxazole (Bactrim®, Resprim®) must not be given during the high-dose phase of therapy.

CONTACT

For further information, or to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's medication, please feel free to contact the Children's Cancer Centre of your child's treating hospital:

- The Royal Children's Hospital Oncology Pharmacy (03) 9345 6290
- Monash Children's Hospital Cancer Centre (03) 8572 3456 or Pharmacist desk (03) 8572 3464

Disclaimer: This information has been prepared by the Paediatric Integrated Cancer Service, with input from the Children's Cancer Centre Pharmacy Departments at The Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital. This information is for educational purposes only and should not be seen as a substitute for advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you have specific questions about the content of this information, or any other medical matter, it is recommended that you consult your doctor, pharmacist or other professional healthcare provider. This information is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, however changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information.

Reviewed March 2017

Available at www.pics.org.au/families