

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.

USE

- Chemotherapy used to treat some types of leukaemia, lymphoma and solid tumour

OTHER NAMES

- MTX

PRESENTATION

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

ADMINISTRATION

Administration will always be in a hospital setting

- Intravenous infusion
- Intravenous injection

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
- Hair loss
- 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

- Intravenous fluids may be administered to lessen the side effects of methotrexate.
- Some medicines increase the side effects of methotrexate, including some medications for pain, certain antibiotics and medications to protect the stomach. Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine including over-the-counter medicines and complementary medicines.
- Sulphamethoxazole-trimethoprim should not be given before, during and shortly after receiving methotrexate. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or clinical nurse consultant/coordinator as to when you should give this medicine.
- Keep ALL medication out of reach of children.
- 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.

HIGH DOSE THERAPY

- Calcium folinate is used to prevent or lessen side effects of methotrexate.
- Intravenous fluids and calcium folinate are continued until the amount of methotrexate in the blood reaches a safe level.

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.