

Methotrexate Top 10

Rheumatology Patient Information

1. Methotrexate (MTX) is usually in tablet form but may be given by injection. It is taken once a week after a main meal. The dose will always be for once a week – do not take more frequently than this.
2. Folic Acid 5mgs is a supplement given with Methotrexate. It is generally taken once a week but can be taken up to 7 days a week if advised by Rheumatology.
3. Your blood will be monitored regularly while you are on Methotrexate. Rheumatology nurses will explain this process to you.
4. Report **adverse effects** including: abnormal bruising, bleeding, rash, chest problems, shortness of breath, dry non-productive.
5. Report symptoms of **infection** including: fever, flu, infection, shingles, and chicken pox.
6. Common side effects include nausea, stomach upsets and mouth ulcers. These can be managed with support from the Rheumatology Advice Line.
7. Avoid live vaccines (e.g. Yellow Fever). Flu and Pneumonia vaccines are recommended. If you require any vaccines please seek advice.
8. Avoid the antibiotic drugs Trimethoprim and Co-Trimoxazole, commonly used to treat urinary tract infection; a safe alternative is available if required.
9. BSR recommendations (BSR and British Health Professionals in Rheumatology (BHPR) advise that men need not stop taking methotrexate before trying for a baby. Females should continue to avoid conception/pregnancy during treatment and for 3 months after stopping. (BSR Guidelines September 2016). MTX is not recommended in breastfeeding due to potential risks.
10. Alcohol should be kept to a minimum as larger amounts may cause problems. (National Guidelines 2 units per day for women, 3 units per day for men).

In the event of **adverse effects, infection or urgent** problems please contact your GP or Out of Hours Services in the first instance as they will have direct access to an on call Rheumatologist at the hospital for specialist advice.

Advice regarding your diagnosis / treatment / monitoring can be obtained by contacting the **Rheumatology Advice Line on 01603 287801**.

An Admin Assistant will arrange a telephone appointment for you to speak with a Specialist Nurse within 24 hours Mon- Thurs 08.30-13.30.