

METHOTREXATE

Patient Checklist

Please could you share this checklist with your GP and ensure that all steps have been taken to keep you safe.

METHOTREXATE TREATS INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE (IBD) BY SUPPRESSING THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

For this reason, we must closely monitor you while taking this medication. This checklist is designed to help reduce risks associated with Methotrexate therapy.

For further information, please refer to our **Medication Information sheets** available on our website.

BEFORE STARTING METHOTREXATE

- Read the Methotrexate information sheet.
- Make an appointment with your GP to discuss starting the medication and to enlist your GP's help with monitoring.
- Have a blood test and a chest X-ray that your doctor will order.
- Ensure that you are up to date with your vaccinations:
 - a) **Influenza** vaccination (Fluvax® - yearly).
 - b) **Pneumococcal** vaccination (Pneumovax® - 5 yearly).
 - c) **Human Papilloma** vaccination (Once - for females who are not yet sexually active).
- Ensure that your pap smears are up to date:
 - a) Annual pap smears are recommended if sexually active.

- Undertake a skin check with your GP or a dermatologist
- Ensure that you have discussed the following with your doctor and had the necessary screening tests:
 - a) Hepatitis B
 - b) Tuberculosis (TB)
 - c) Varicella (chicken pox).
- Ensure that you have discussed your complete medical history with your doctor, particularly if you have had past severe infections or cancer.
- Ensure that you have provided your doctor with an up to date medication list.
- Ensure that you have discussed your plans for pregnancy if relevant.

You cannot take Methotrexate during pregnancy or for 3 months before conception (male and female). It is likely to harm your unborn child.

AFTER STARTING METHOTREXATE

- Make an appointment with your GP to discuss and commence monitoring.
- Take regular folic acid every day that you are not taking Methotrexate.
- Use two forms of contraception.
- Not breast feed.

- Have regular blood tests for full blood count and liver function tests:
 - a) **Weekly for at least 4 weeks** after you reach a stable dose
 - b) **Monthly for 3 months** thereafter
 - c) **3-monthly for as long as you are on treatment.**
- Ensure that you are up to date with your:
 - a) **Pneumococcal** vaccination (Pneumovax® - 5 yearly).
 - b) **Influenza** vaccination (Fluvax® - yearly).
- Avoid live vaccines (polio, yellow fever, MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and BCG (tuberculosis).
- Limit alcohol.
- Be careful in the sun and vigilant with sun protection. The skin's sensitivity is increased whilst taking these medications.

- Skin checks yearly with either your GP or a dermatologist.
- Annual pap smears are recommended for sexually active women whilst on therapy.
- Inform your doctor if you develop any side effects in particular easy bruising, fever or pain.
- Cease methotrexate if you are unable to have regular blood tests or are considering pregnancy.

Please contact your doctor if you have any concerns.

QUESTIONS? Please don't hesitate to contact Lumen Gastroenterology on 08 8267 1766