

# Medication Information Card

## Methotrexate (Meth – o – trex – ate)

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### Other names for this medication

Amethopterin

There are many other names for this medication.

### How this medication is used

This medication affects your immune system and reduces inflammation. It is used to help many problems, such as:

- treat arthritis symptoms such as swelling, stiffness and joint pain. This medication slows down the disease and protects the joints from further damage.
- reduce inflammation in Crohn's disease and may help to decrease or stop the use of steroid medications such as prednisone.
- treat psoriasis.
- this medication is also used to treat some types of cancer.

It may take 8 to 12 weeks to get the full effect of this medication.

Talk to your doctor if you or your partner are planning to get pregnant.

## **How to take this medication**

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor. If you take this medication once a week, it should be taken on the same time each week. If you take this medication once a day, take it at the same time each day.

If you miss your weekly dose by less than 24 hours, take it as soon as you remember. Contact your doctor if you miss it by more than one day. Do not take 2 doses at one time.

To avoid stomach upset, take this medication with a meal or snack.

It is important that you see your doctor regularly while taking this medication. You will need to have blood tests done while taking this medication.

Avoid drinking alcohol such as beer, wine or liquor while taking Methotrexate as it can damage the liver.

Due to increased risk of infection, check with your doctor before having any vaccinations, flu shots or dental work.

Do not take ASA (aspirin, acetylsalicylic acid) without your doctor's approval. Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for headache, fever or minor pain relief.

## **While taking this medication you may notice**

- loss of appetite
- diarrhea
- nausea or vomiting
- sores in mouth or lips for more than a week

Talk to your doctor if you are having any of these effects. Your doctor may want you to take a vitamin called Folic Acid to help.

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## **While taking this medication you may also notice**

- drowsiness
- pale skin
- acne
- sensitivity to sunlight
- thinning hair

Avoid direct sunlight. While in the sun, wear sunscreen and sunglasses that block ultraviolet (UV) light, a hat and clothing that covers your skin.

## **Contact your doctor if you notice**

- dry, hacking cough
- trouble breathing
- severe stomach pain
- yellow eyes, yellow skin, dark urine
- signs of infection such as fever, chills, sore throat
- signs of bleeding such as easy bruising, nosebleeds, black or bloody stools, red urine