

Methotrexate

What is Methotrexate?

Methotrexate is a drug that is used to treat many kinds of cancer.

How will I receive Methotrexate?

Methotrexate is a clear yellow liquid that is injected into a vein (Intravenous) or muscle (Intramuscular) or into your spine (Intrathecal).

What are the common side effects?

Please see, “Managing Symptoms at Home”, in the manual and refer to the Symptom Management section.

What You May Expect?	What Should You Do?
Decreased blood counts (lowered platelet, red and white blood cells) may occur. You may feel weak and tired. You may develop infections more easily and may bruise more easily. Your health care providers will test your blood frequently to monitor your blood counts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report any signs of infection, fever, and unusual bleeding or bruising.
Nausea and vomiting may occur while you are taking Methotrexate. Many people have little or no nausea.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be given a prescription for an anti-nausea drug(s) to take at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred. Drink plenty of liquids. Eat and drink often in small amounts.
Sore mouth may occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. Please see the “Mouth Pain/Mucositis” section of the patient manual.
Your skin may sunburn easily	<p>To help prevent sunburn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid direct sunlight. Wear a hat, long sleeves, and long pants or skirt outside on sunny days. Apply a sun block lotion with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 or greater.
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.

These are the most common side effects. Others may occur. Please report any problems to your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse.

Call and Seek Help Immediately If You Have:

- Signs of an infection such as fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain or burning when you pass urine; redness, pain or swelling of any area of your body; sores forming anywhere on your body.
- Signs of bleeding problems such as black tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.

Contact Your Nurse Or Doctor If You Have:

- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Signs of liver problems such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-colored stools.
- Signs of kidney problems such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs, numbness or tingling in feet or hands.
- Signs of lung problems such as dry cough, shortness of breath or chest pain.
- Severe skin reaction where you have had radiation.
- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, sores or pain where the needle was placed.

Special Instructions

Methotrexate may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. Use birth control while being treated with Methotrexate. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment. Talk to your doctor or nurse about any additional questions.

Drug-Drug Interactions

Other drugs may **interact** with Methotrexate. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs

Drug-Food Interactions

None known at this time.

For more complete information please request an additional teaching sheet from the National Library of Medicine at www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html, or your nurse or pharmacist.

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