

Can I start a family or breastfeed?

- Please tell your doctor if you are pregnant, preparing for pregnancy or breastfeeding before you begin the treatment.

How should I store the medicine?

- Keep the tablets away from heat, moist and direct sunlight.
- Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

In Summary

What you need to know about allopurinol?

- Take allopurinol approximately at the same time every day, unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.
- Always come for your blood tests on the scheduled date.
- Beware of the side effects and know when to seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not take over-the-counter medicines, supplements or herbal medicines without checking with your doctor/pharmacist/advanced practice nurse first.
- For patients who intend to start a family, consult your doctor before you start the treatment.
- If you have any questions about the treatment, please discuss it with your doctor/advanced practice nurse at 65762418 or Pharmacist at 63265077.

Produced by
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Allopurinol



About your medicine

- Allopurinol is used to lower uric acid levels in the body by preventing (crystal) formation. This is expected to bring forth the following benefits:
 - Long-term prevention of gout attacks
 - Prevention of kidney stone, especially if the serum uric acid levels are elevated
 - Dissolution of 'big' uric acid crystal called tophus
 - Lowers uric acid level during chemotherapy
- Your doctor may also give it to you for reasons other than what have been mentioned above e.g. Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome.

How is the medicine given?

- Your doctor would normally start it at a low dose and gradually increase the dose if necessary (typically based on the uric acid concentration in the blood). This helps you to tolerate the medication better and lessens the likelihood of gout flares initially.
- Be patient and take it at the dose recommended by your doctor. The benefits are slow to come so do not discontinue the medication unless allergic reactions occur.
- Take it after meals at the same time every day. Do drink plenty of non-caffeinated or non-carbonated fluids throughout the day, especially during the early part of the day, unless your doctor tells you to restrict fluid intake. This is especially important if you have a history of kidney stones as adequate fluid intake may help to dissolve existing or prevent new stone formation.

How long does it take for the medicine to be effective?

- It usually takes several months to notice any improvement in symptoms after starting allopurinol.
- The frequency of gout attack may increase in the first few weeks or months after the initiation of this medication.
 - However, in the long run the use of allopurinol may prevent gout flares and/or result in the dissolution of uric acid deposits called tophi.
- There are measures that can be taken to prevent or reduce the frequency of gout flares such as the concurrent use of low-dose colchicine or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for the first few months, if not contraindicated.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

- If you have missed a dose, take it as soon as you remember.
- If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule.
- Do not double the dose to make up for the missed dose.

What are the possible side effects of the medicine?

- The medication is generally well-tolerated. The most common side effects are:
 - Loose stools (diarrhoea)
 - Stomach upset
 - Drowsiness (reported by patients occasionally but not common). Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery if it occurs.

When do I seek immediate medical attention?

- As with any other medications, a very small number of patients using allopurinol may experience RARE but serious side effects. Do seek immediate medical attention and stop the medication if you develop:
 - **Any skin rashes**, itching and/or swelling (e.g. face, lips, tongue or throat) as serious allergic reactions involving the skin and mucous membrane of the mouth, nose, throat and genitals have been reported.
 - In extreme cases, extensive skin peeling and ulceration of the mucous membranes may occur. These reactions may happen immediately after treatment or sometimes delayed after allopurinol is started.

Can I take other medicines or supplements?

- Your doctor may prescribe pain-relieving treatments to reduce inflammation and pain quickly and to prevent gout flare during the initial treatment.
- Always check with the doctor or pharmacist first before self-treatment with any over-the-counter medicines.
- Do not take any supplements, alternative or herbal medicines without informing your doctor or pharmacist.
- Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are on blood-thinning medication, e.g. warfarin.

What special dietary instructions should I follow?

- Maintain adequate hydration (2 to 3 litres of fluid a day, unless otherwise advised by your doctor).