

METHOTREXATE

Why is this medication prescribed?

In dermatology, we use Methotrexate to treat severe psoriasis that cannot be controlled by other treatments. It is also used by other doctors to treat severe rheumatoid arthritis and is even used to treat certain types of cancer. Methotrexate treats psoriasis by slowing the growth of skin cells to stop scales from forming.

How should this medicine be used?

Methotrexate is unique in that it is prescribed to be taken once/weekly. We never prescribe this medication to be taken daily. If a patient were to take this medication daily, it could be very harmful.

What special precautions should I follow?

Tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take. Be sure to mention the use of any antibiotics as some may interact with Methotrexate. You should also avoid NSAID pain-relievers while on Methotrexate. Do not breast-feed while you are taking Methotrexate. Women should not get pregnant while on this medication, nor should men conceive a child while using it. Because it has the potential to affect your liver, you should also limit alcohol intake to a maximum of 1-2 drinks per week.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Methotrexate may cause side effects. Some of the more common side effects are dizziness, drowsiness, headache, swollen/tender gums, fatigue, decreased appetite, stomach upset/diarrhea, and hair loss. Please refer to the pharmacist's information you receive with your medication for a full list of potential side effects. If at any point you feel like the medication is causing a problem, let us know or seek appropriate medical attention.

What about labs?

It's important that you have the requested labwork performed as directed by your doctor. Methotrexate is a serious medication and often the first sign of someone being sensitive to this medicine is that their labwork shows abnormalities. If we see these changes, we can often adjust or stop the medication before any harm is done.

What dose am I taking?

We are asking you to take ____ pills of Methotrexate once/weekly with a meal. If nausea is a problem, taking them at bedtime may help.