

Concerning Treatment Using Methotrexate

We will collect blood samples from you prior to the start of your treatment. Once you have been cleared to begin treatment, your doctor will write a prescription and contact you.

- Methotrexate tablet: Take the entire dose once a week. We recommend that you take your medication at the end of the week, since we will need to collect a blood sample from you 1–2 days before your next dose.
- You will start with a low dose that is rapidly increased. See below.
- You will take folate in tablet form 24 hours after you take your methotrexate tablets to protect your liver and counteract side effects.
- We will collect blood samples from you every two weeks for the first seven weeks of your treatment starting from before your second dose.
We will collect the next blood sample from you prior to the follow-up appointment scheduled for three months after your treatment began.
Following that, you will need to take a blood test every 3–6 months.

Dosage:

Patients usually start with a low dose that is rapidly increased.
Follow the instructions written on your prescription/medication.

A follow-up appointment will be scheduled for you with a nurse or doctor 3–4 months after your treatment begins.

Points to remember during your treatment:

Side effects

- Your treatment may cause side effects that won't be obvious to you, and that can only be detected via blood tests. For this reason, it is important that you get tested as your doctor has prescribed. In the case of abnormal test results, we may decide that you need to re-take your blood test, and possibly also lower your dose or stop using the medication for a time.
- Most people experience no problems with their treatment. The most common side effects are mild stomach upset and nausea. Some people might experience headaches and/or feel tired after taking their tablet(s). If you experience these side effects, we encourage you to take your tablets in the evening.

Further information

- **Pregnancy:** You must stop taking methotrexate three months before you plan to conceive a child. This applies to both the baby's mother and father.
- **Vaccinations:** It is recommended that the influenza vaccine be taken annually. You must not receive any live vaccines while being treated with methotrexate. You are welcome to contact our dermatology clinic (Hudbehandling och dagsjukvård) should you need any advice on this.
- Use **alcohol** only in moderation and avoid it if possible. Alcohol affects the liver. You must avoid alcohol altogether on the day you take your methotrexate tablets.
- **Infections:** You should pause your methotrexate treatment whenever you suffer from an infection. However, in the case of mild infections, such as slight colds or cystitis, you can continue your treatment as usual as long as you don't feel generally ill.

You can contact Hudbehandling och dagsjukvård Sahlgrenska by phone on +46 (0)31-342 11 12.