
Leflunomide

Treatment Information

Leflunomide

The Tablets Leflunomide tablets come in two strengths - 10mg and 20mg

How does it work? Leflunomide works by decreasing the autoimmune response.

How do I take Leflunomide? Leflunomide is taken once a day; Leflunomide can be taken at any time of day with or without food and should be swallowed whole.

How long will it take to work? It may take 4 to 6 weeks before any improvement is felt, it could be as long as 6 months before you feel the full benefit of Leflunomide. You should continue taking your other medication as advised.

What shall I do if I miss a tablet? Take it as soon as possible, unless it is time to take your next dose. Do not double up on the next dose to make up for the one you missed.

What dose do I take? Normally you will be given the 20mg or 10mg tablets once a day.

Are there any side effects? As with all medication some people may experience side effects. These may include:

- Sickness
- Rashes
- Diarrhoea
- Mouth Ulcers
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Skin dryness
- Hair loss
- Rise in blood pressure

Leflunomide can occasionally affect the blood count and you may be more likely to develop infections.

What Tests Will I Have? You will need regular blood tests and checks on your blood pressure; these will be more often when you first start taking the tablets.

Important Information

Immunisation - You should avoid any of the live vaccines (e.g. polio and rubella) whilst taking Leflunomide.

Leflunomide may harm an unborn baby, it must **not** be taken during pregnancy or if you are thinking of becoming pregnant.

Rheumatology department Patient Information

If you are or plan to become **pregnant**, you should discuss this with your doctor. Women must wait two years between stopping Leflunomide and becoming pregnant or use the washout procedure. This consists of taking colestyramine or charcoal for several days. If you would like any further information about this, please ask your practitioner or doctor

Alcohol - Leflunomide can affect the liver, therefore, you should avoid alcohol whilst taking this medication.

You should see your doctor if you develop any signs of infection.

Contact Details

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment phone the Rheumatology Advice line on

01202 442849.

www.poole.nhs.uk/our_services/rheumatology.asp

For further health-related information, please contact:

The Health Information & Resource Centre

Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Longfleet Road

Poole

BH15 2JB

Telephone: (01202) 448003

Rheumatology Practitioners

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Rheumatology Department, Poole Hospital NHS Trust

Dr. P. Thompson, Dr. S. Richards

We can supply this information in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. A member of staff will be happy to discuss this with you. Please call PALS on 01202 448499 or the Health Information Centre on 01202 448003 for further advice