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## Department of Gastroenterology

# Methotrexate and Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

This leaflet is designed to give you more specific information regarding dosing and monitoring to that in the methotrexate book you should have already received. All the other aspects of safety and care will be as indicated in the book.

### How do I get started on treatment?

Once the doctor has decided that methotrexate treatment is necessary you will normally be given an appointment to be seen in the clinic by the specialist gastroenterology (disorders of the digestive system) pharmacist or IBD nurse specialist for further counselling regarding the treatment and monitoring guidelines. This will normally be within one to two weeks after seeing the doctor or sometimes sooner.

**You must not start treatment until you have spoken to the pharmacist or IBD nurse and been given specific instructions on how to take this safely.**

### What dose do I take?

Methotrexate tablets are available in 2.5mg and 10mg strengths. Local doctors almost always prescribe the 2.5mg strength tablets.

You will usually be started on 15mg once weekly increasing to 20mg once weekly after two weeks up to a maximum of 25mg once weekly after a further two weeks depending on how you respond.

You should always check the strength of tablets and dose is correct.

## How long will methotrexate take to work?

Methotrexate does not work immediately. It may be 4 to 12 weeks before you notice any benefit. Therefore if your disease is very active it may be necessary for you to take other medications which work more quickly, for example steroids (or occasionally an intravenous infusion called infliximab might be necessary) until the methotrexate starts to become more effective.

## Do I need any special checks while on methotrexate?

Certain checks are important when taking methotrexate so that your doctor and IBD nurse can see if the treatment is working and that it is not causing any harm to other parts of the body.

The tests you will require are:-

**Full blood count (FBC) and Liver function tests (LFT's) every week for two months, then monthly thereafter if all remains well.**

There may be other tests you require on top of these from time to time and your doctor or IBD nurse will advise you if and when these need to be done

**Record the results in the patient held record book given to you by the hospital doctor/specialist IBD nurse. It is important to bring this book to clinic appointments and to any GP appointments you may have.**

## Where can I obtain further information?

If you would like any further information about methotrexate, or if you have any concerns about your treatment, you should discuss this with your doctor IBD nurse or pharmacist.



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. You cannot smoke on site. For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Informacje te można otrzymać w innych językach, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audio. Zamówienia prosimy składać pod numerem: 01223 216032 lub wysyłając e-mail: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

#### Polish

Se precisar desta informação num outro idioma, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio por favor telefone para o 01223 216032 ou envie uma mensagem para: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

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Если вам требуется эта информация на другом языке, крупным шрифтом или в аудиоформате, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по телефону 01223 216032 или на вебсайт [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

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#### Cantonese

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#### Turkish

এই তথ্য বাংলায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও টেপে পেতে চাইলে দয়া করে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করুন বা [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করুন।

#### Bengali

#### Document history

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Contact number	01223 245151
Published	March 2009
Review date	March 2011
Supersedes which document?	Version1, March 2007
File name	Methotrexate_IBD.doc
Version number	2
Ref	PIN 1562