



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



Ospidéal Ollscoile Chorcaí  
Cork University Hospital

Department of Rheumatology

## Metoject Patient Information Sheet

### Why am I prescribed Metoject?

Metoject is Methotrexate in liquid form specially prepared for an injection, which is given under the skin.

It is used to treat several different types of rheumatic diseases including rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis.

It is often prescribed to people who cannot tolerate Methotrexate tablets. Metoject can reduce inflammation by reducing the activity of the immune system, so it is always used with care.

### When do I take Metoject?

Metoject is self administered **once a week on the same day**. Your doctor or nurse will show you how to administer this injection and will give the first dose to you.

They will also give you a step-by-step guide to help you remember how to give it when you are at home.

### What dose should I take?

Metoject injections are available in **10mg, 15mg, 20mg and 25mg doses**. These injections are colour coded so you should always check the dose is correct.

Your doctor will advise you what dose you should be on.

### How will I dispose of the syringe?

Your doctor or nurse will arrange for special bins to be delivered to your house or pharmacy.

### What are the possible side effects?

Some patients report some local irritation around the injection site. If this happens place a clean cool cloth over the area until the irritation subsides.

Very rarely Metoject can cause a feeling of sickness, diarrhoea, mouth ulcers, hair loss and skin rashes.

Taking Metoject can affect the blood count (one of the effects is that fewer blood cells are made) and can make you more likely to develop infection. If you develop a **sore throat** or **other infection**, or if you have a **fever**, if you develop **unexplained bruising or bleeding**, or if you develop any **new symptoms** after starting Metoject you should see your doctor.

Rarely Metoject causes inflammation of the lung with breathlessness. If you become **breathless**, you should see your doctor immediately.

While taking Methotrexate you should avoid direct sun light and the use of tanning beds. You should use SPF 30 or higher when out. There have been rare reports of lymphomas and other malignancies in patients who have been treated with Methotrexate.

If you have not had chickenpox but come into contact with someone who had chickenpox or shingles, or if you develop chickenpox or shingles while you are on Metoject, you should see your doctor immediately as you may need special treatment.

Most doctors prescribe folic acid tablets to patients who are taking Metoject as this can reduce the likelihood of side effects.

### **Do I need any special checks while on Metoject?**

Because Metoject can affect the blood count and sometimes cause liver problems, your doctor will arrange for you to have regular blood checks while taking this drug.

You may be asked to keep a record booklet with your blood test results. Bring this with you when you visit your GP or the hospital

### **Can I take other medicines along with Metoject?**

Some drugs interact with Metoject so you should always let any doctor treating you know that you are taking Metoject.

Special care is needed with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. You may only take anti-inflammatory drugs if your doctor prescribes them to you.

Do not take 'over the counter' or herbal preparations without discussing this first with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Do not take drugs containing trimethoprim (for example septrin).

### **Can I have vaccinations while on Metoject?**

It is recommended that you should not be immunised using any of the 'live' vaccines such as polio, rubella and yellow fever.

An 'inactivated' polio vaccine can be given instead of the 'live' polio vaccine and the inactivated version should be also given to people you are in close contact with such as members of your household.

If you are on Metoject you should avoid contact with children who have been given the 'live' polio vaccine for 4-6 weeks after vaccination.

Yearly flu vaccines and pneumovax are safe and recommended.

### **Does Metoject affect fertility or pregnancy?**

Metoject may result in a temporary decrease in fertility. Pregnancy should be avoided while you are taking this medication. Once Metoject has been stopped both women and men must wait at least 3 months before trying to conceive.

If you are planning a family, or if you become pregnant while taking Metoject, you should discuss this with your doctor as soon as possible.

Taking Metoject is contraindicated while breastfeeding.

### **May I drink alcohol while taking Metoject?**

If you drink alcohol you should only drink it in small amounts because Metoject and alcohol can interact and damage your liver. Discuss this with your doctor.

### **Contact Details**

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### **Always remember!**

**Check dose of your Metoject by checking the colour of the injection box. Keep all medicines out of reach of children. Please note that this information leaflet does not list all the side effects of Metoject. Always read the drug information leaflet which comes with your medicine.**