

# COLCHICINE

Other names: Colgout®



**Important note:** The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

## Why you are taking this medication?

Colchicine is used for the acute (immediate and severe) attacks of gout and can also be taken regularly to prevent gout. Colchicine acts as an anti-inflammatory medicine by preventing swelling of the joints – it reduces pain and decreases uric acid being deposited in to the joints.

Colchicine is also sometimes used in the treatment of pericarditis (inflammation around the heart), however doses differ from those discussed in the next section.

## When to take this medication

- Take this medicine exactly as your doctor has instructed. Swallow the tablets whole with a large glass of water.
- Colchicine may be taken with or without food.
- Generally, two tablets are taken to start then one tablet (0.5mg) is taken every six hours. Take no more than 2.5mg (5 tablets) in the first 24 hours.
- The total dose over 4 days must not go over 6mg (12 tablets) or 3mg (6 tablets) in the elderly or have poor kidney function.

## If you miss a dose

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

## Side effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- stomach pain, vomiting, severe diarrhoea or burning feeling in stomach or throat
- blood in the urine or a sudden decrease in the amount of urine
- numbness, tingling, pain or weakness in hands or feet
- bloody or black, tarry stools (poo)
- rash, itch or swelling
- fever or sore throat
- abnormal bleeding or bruising

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- loss of hair
- loss of appetite

If you get stomach pains, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting stop taking your colchicine.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any other side effect(s) from your medicine that are not mentioned here.

### **Other medicines**

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Avoid drinking alcohol while taking colchicine.

Make sure your doctor knows if you are taking any other medicines especially:

- alkalinising agents (e.g. sodium bicarbonate and potassium citrate - medicine for the urinary tract, cystitis)
- anticoagulants e.g. warfarin
- antibiotics (erythromycin, clarithromycin, roxithromycin)
- ciclosporin (medicine used to suppress the immune system)
- Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) e.g. diclofenac, ibuprofen, naproxen

### **Pregnancy**

If you or your partner are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant, or breastfeeding, talk to your doctor before taking this medicine.

### **Storage**

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

**Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist**