

Allopurinol for hyperuricaemia

This leaflet is about the use of allopurinol for hyperuricaemia.



This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adults. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Name of drug

Allopurinol

Brand names: Caplenal, Cosuric, Rimapurinol, Zyloric

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

Your child needs to take allopurinol to stop the body making too much uric acid. Uric acid is made in the body when food is digested and when cells are broken down naturally. Too much uric acid in the blood is called hyperuricaemia, and it can lead to crystals being formed. This can cause gout and make the kidneys work less well. **Your child should drink plenty of liquid each day (4 or 5 large glasses of water) to help this.**

Gout is a type of arthritis, it happens when the crystals form inside joints. The most common symptom is sudden and severe pain in the joint, along with swelling and redness. The joint of the big toe is the joint usually affected, but it can develop in any joint.

What is allopurinol available as?

- **Tablets:** 100 mg, 300 mg; these contain small amounts of lactose
- **Liquid medicine** can be ordered specially from your pharmacist: 100 mg in 5 mL

When should I give allopurinol?

Allopurinol may be given **once** or **twice** each day. Your doctor will tell you how often to give it.

- **Once a day:** this can be in the morning OR the evening.
- **Twice a day:** this should be once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are 10–12 hours apart, for example some time between 7 and 8 am, and between 7 and 8 pm.

Give the medicine at about the same time(s) each day so that this becomes part of your child's daily routine, which will help you to remember.

How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of allopurinol (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.



It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.

How should I give it?



Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablet.



Liquid medicine: Measure out the right amount using an oral syringe or medicine spoon. You can get these from your pharmacist. Do not use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.

When should the medicine start working?

Allopurinol will lower the amount of uric acid in your child's blood within a few weeks. You may not notice much difference in your child but their kidneys will be protected from damage. If your child has gout, the attacks may continue for a few months until all the crystals of uric acid in the tissues have dissolved away. Continue to give the medicine to your child during this time. If you are worried about whether it is helping, contact your doctor.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of allopurinol, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of allopurinol, you do not need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

What if I forget to give it?

If you usually give it once a day in the morning: Give the missed dose when you remember during the day, as long as this is at least 12 hours before the next dose is due.

If you usually give it once a day in the evening: If you remember before bedtime, give the missed dose. You do not need to wake up a sleeping child to give a missed dose. You can give the missed dose in the morning, as long as this is at least 12 hours before the evening dose is due.

If you usually give it twice a day: If you remember up to 4 hours after you should have given a dose, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at about 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose. Just give the next dose as usual.

What if I give too much?

You are unlikely to do harm if you give an extra dose of allopurinol by mistake.

If you are concerned that you may have given too much, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet). Have the medicine or packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don't want (side-effects).

Side-effects you must do something about



If your child is short of breath or is wheezing, or their face, lips or tongue start to swell, or they develop a rash, they may be allergic to allopurinol. Take your child to hospital or call an ambulance straight away.



If your child gets a skin rash, stop giving the medicine and contact your doctor straight away. They may want to stop the medicine and start it again gradually. This can happen months or years after treatment is started.



If your child seems to bruise more easily or bleeding doesn't stop as quickly as usual, or if they get a yellowish tinge to the skin or the whites of the eyes, contact your doctor straight away, as there may be a problem with your child's blood or liver.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may get stomach pain or cramps, and may feel sick (nausea) or be sick (vomit). Giving the medicine with some food or milk may help. These side-effects usually wear off after a few days as your child gets used to the medicine. If they are still a problem after one week contact your doctor.
- Your child may feel dizzy or light-headed when they stand up. Encourage them to stand up slowly and to sit or lie down if they feel dizzy or light-headed. If you are worried contact your doctor.
- Your child may get headaches, feel sleepy, have blurred eyesight or red eyes.
- Your child may get pins and needles
- Your child may say that things taste different.

These effects should wear off as your child gets used to the medicine. If you are worried or they are still a problem after two weeks contact your doctor.

- Your child's hair may become thinner and some may fall out. It should grow back when the medicine is stopped. If this happens, discuss it with your doctor at your next visit.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor.

Can other medicines be given at the same time as allopurinol?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist **before** giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complementary medicines.

Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?

- It is important to make sure your child drinks plenty of liquid each day (4 or 5 large glasses of water).
- Your doctor will check your child's blood from time to time, to make sure the treatment is working.

General advice about medicines

- Try to give medicines at about the same times each day, to help you remember.
- If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your doctor but continue to give the medicine as usual in the meantime. Do not give extra doses as you may do harm.
- Only give this medicine to your child. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.
- If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor straight away.
- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine tablets in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.
- You may need to keep liquid medicine in the fridge – check the instructions on the bottle. Make sure that the medicine doesn't freeze.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.
- Keep the medicine in the container it came in.

Who to contact for more information

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about allopurinol and about other medicines used to treat hyperuricaemia.

You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111 - Tel 111 - www.nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24 - Tel 111 - www.nhs24.scot

Wales: NHS 111 Wales - Tel 111 - www.111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct - www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk