Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Colchicine

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Colcrys [DSC]; Gloperba; Lodoco; Mitigare [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

EURO-Colchicine; JAMP-Colchicine; Myinfla; PMS-Colchicine; SANDOZ Colchicine [DSC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent gout attacks.
- It is used to treat familial Mediterranean fever.
- It is used in some people to lower the chance of heart attack, stroke, some heart procedures, and death from some heart problems.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have any of these health problems: Kidney disease or liver disease.
- If you have any of these health problems: Bone marrow disease (like low white blood cell count, low platelet count, or anemia).

- If you take any other drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins). There are many drugs that interact with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, seizures, and others. Some interactions with this drug can be severe and even deadly.

Children:

- If this drug is being used to prevent gout attacks. This drug is not recommended for use in children to prevent gout attacks.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

This drug interacts with many other drugs. The chance of severe, life-threatening, or deadly side effects may be raised. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice.
- This drug will not help other kinds of pain.
- Deaths from overdoses have happened with this drug in adults and children. Keep away from children. Do not take more than you were told. If you take too much of this drug or if it is taken by accident, call your poison control center or get medical care right away.
- Sperm problems have happened while taking this drug. Rarely, this may affect being able to father a child. This may go back to normal after the drug is stopped. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

Capsules, extended-release tablets, tablets (Lodoco), and oral solution:

- This drug is not approved to treat gout attacks. If you have a gout attack while taking this drug, talk with your doctor.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Numbness or tingling in the hands or feet.
- Pale or gray skin color of the lips, tongue, or palms of hands.
- Very bad muscle problems have happened with this drug. This can also lead to kidney problems. Tell your doctor if you have muscle pain or weakness, especially if you feel very tired or weak or have a fever. Tell your doctor if you are not able to pass urine or you have a change in how much urine is passed.
- Low blood cell counts have happened with this drug. If blood cell counts get very low, this can lead to bleeding problems, infections, or anemia. Sometimes, very low blood cell counts can be life-threatening or deadly. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of infection like fever, chills, or

sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or if you feel very tired or weak.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, and throwing up are common with this drug. If these happen, call your doctor to talk about ways to lower these effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not go away, or get very bad.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Take with or without food.
- Take this drug exactly as you have been told. Do not take more than you were told, take it more often, or stop taking it without first talking with your doctor.

Liquid (solution):

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.
- Do not use a household teaspoon or tablespoon to measure this drug. Doing so could lead to the dose being too high.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

All products:

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Tablets:

- To treat a gout attack, this drug is taken on an as needed basis.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

Tablets and capsules:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Liquid (solution):

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

All products:

- Keep lid tightly closed.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour

down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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