

## **ALLOPURINOL**

It is used to treat Gout.

It works by lowering the levels of Uric acid in your blood.

Gout is when you produce too much uric acid or your kidneys do not filter enough of it out, it can build up and form tiny, sharp crystals which can form around your joints which can cause the swollen and painful symptoms you experience.

### **Monitoring**

When your medication is prescribed by the GP, you will be required to have regular blood test monitoring, to ensure their optimum safety.

These blood tests are annually and are comprised of a Kidney Function Test (U&E) and a Urate/Uric Acid test (UA).

### **Serious Side Effects**

Call 111 immediately or speak to your Doctor if:

- the whites of your eyes or your skin turn yellow, this is less obvious on black or brown skin – these can be signs of a liver problem
- a high temperature, sore throat and swollen glands or feel generally unwell – this could mean there are problems with your white blood cells
- bruising for no obvious reason or bleeding gums (which takes a long time to stop) when brushing your teeth
- you are unusually thirsty, going to the toilet to pee a lot, unusually tired, losing weight without trying, or have blurred vision – these could be signs of diabetes

### **Skin rashes**

Stevens-Johnson syndrome is a rare side effect of Allopurinol.

It causes flu-like symptoms, followed by a red or purple rash that spreads and forms blisters.

The affected skin eventually dies and peels off.

It's more likely to happen in the first 8 weeks of taking allopurinol, or when the dose is increased too quickly.

It can also happen if allopurinol is stopped suddenly for a few days and then restarted at the same dose as before.

It's better to reduce the dose and then increase it slowly.

Stevens-Johnson syndrome is more common in:

- children
- people who developed a rash with an epilepsy medicine in the past
- people who are allergic to an antibiotic called trimethoprim
- people also taking a medicine called sodium valproate

To help prevent the chance of you getting a rash that could be confused with Stevens-Johnson syndrome, it's best not to try new medicines or food during the first 3 months of treatment with allopurinol.

It's also best to not start taking allopurinol within 2 weeks of a viral infection, vaccination, or rash caused by something else.

If you develop a skin rash with flushing, blisters or ulcers go to A&E immediately.

### **Pregnancy and Breastfeeding**

Allopurinol is not usually recommended during pregnancy.

Please speak to your doctor if you are planning a pregnancy or become pregnant whilst taking this medication.

If your doctor or midwife says your baby is healthy, it's OK to take allopurinol while breastfeeding.

Talk to your doctor, health visitor, midwife, pharmacist as soon as possible if:

- your baby is not feeding as well as usual
- your baby is being sick (vomiting)
- your baby has diarrhoea
- your baby has a rash
- you have any other concerns about your baby