

FOR THE PATIENT: Levamisole

Other names: ERGAMISOL®

- **Levamisole** (leh-VAM-i-sole) is a drug that is used to treat some kinds of cancer. It is a tablet that you take by mouth. The tablet contains lactose.
- It is important to **take** levamisole exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions. Levamisole should be taken **with food and with a glass of water or juice**.
- For 3 times a day dosing: If you **miss a dose** of levamisole, take it as soon as you can if it is within 4 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 4 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times. Make sure that you take all the tablets for that course of treatment.
- For once a day dosing: If you **miss a dose** of levamisole, take it as soon as you can if it is within 12 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 12 hours since your missed dose, take the missed dose and take your next dose the following day. Make sure that you take all the tablets for that course of treatment.
- **Store** levamisole tablets out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light and moisture.
- Some other drugs such as prednisone (DELTASONE®), dexamethasone (DECADRON®, DEXASONE®, HEXADROL®), warfarin (COUMADIN®) and phenytoin (DILANTIN®) may **interact** with levamisole. Tell your doctor if you are taking these or any other drugs as your dose may need to be changed. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) will not affect the safety or usefulness of levamisole. However, you may have a reaction which causes flushing and/or nausea if you drink alcohol while you are taking levamisole. The reaction may also occur for a few days after you stop taking levamisole. Many people have no reaction with alcohol.
- The effect of levamisole on fertility and pregnancy is not known. It is best to **use birth control** while being treated with levamisole. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. **Do not breast feed** during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors or dentists that you are taking levamisole before you receive any treatment from them.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea may occur. Many people have little or no nausea.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Take your levamisole right after eating. If you take it 3 times a day, take each dose after a meal. You may be given an antinausea prescription to take at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred. ·Follow antinausea drug directions closely. ·Drink plenty of liquids. ·Eat often in small amounts. ·Try the ideas in the <i>For the Patient: Nausea</i>.
<p>Diarrhea may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Drink plenty of fluids. ·Eat often in small amounts. ·Eat low fibre foods such as cheese, rice, white bread and cooked vegetables. ·Avoid high fibre foods such as bran, whole grain breads and cereals, nuts, raw fruits and raw vegetables. ·Note: If milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the tablet may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® just before your levamisole dose.
<p>Hair loss does not usually occur with levamisole although you may notice some thinning. Your hair will grow back once you stop taking levamisole. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Use a gentle baby shampoo and soft brush. ·Avoid hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.

STOP TAKING YOUR LEVAMISOLE AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C); chills; cough; sore throat; pain or burning when you pass urine; redness, pain or swelling of any area of your body; sores forming anywhere on your body.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.

STOP TAKING YOUR LEVAMISOLE AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:

- Seizures.

- Numbness, tingling or pin in face, hands or feet.
- Signs of **nerve problems** (rare) such as blurred vision, trouble in walking, confusion or paranoia (feelings of persecution), lip smacking or puffing, cheek puffing, rapid or worm-like tongue movements, trembling or shaking.

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:

- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Joint or muscle pain.
- Skin rash or itching.
- Unusual tiredness or sleepiness.
- Nervousness, dizziness, headache, depression, nightmares, trouble sleeping.

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR DOCTOR.

See ***Chemotherapy and You: a Guide to Self-help During Treatment*** available free from the Canadian Cancer Society for more information on managing side effects.

Notes: