

# Colchicine

Medication Information Leaflet

## What is this medication for?

Colchicine is used for the treatment and prevention of gout flares, which is a condition that can cause pain, redness, and swelling in the joints (big toe, ankle, or knee). Gout is caused by too much uric acid when the body breaks down chemicals called purines. Hence, excess uric acid can build up in the joints and cause gout pain. In addition, gout can be affected by conditions, such as diabetes, poor kidney function, obese, cancer, medications, or eating purine-rich food (alcohol, seafood, and other foods).

## How should I take/use this medication?

- Take this medication once you get the symptoms of a gout attack.
- Colchicine can be taken with or after food.
- Do not take more doses than what your doctor recommends.

## What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

If you are told by your doctor to take colchicine regularly and if you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Then take your next dose at the usual time. Do not take two doses to make up for the missed dose.

## What precautions should I take?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication
- You have a history of
  - Liver condition
  - Kidney condition
  - Blood disorder
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding
- You are taking any other medications, including supplements, traditional medications and herbal remedies.

## **What are some common side-effects of this medication?**

- Stomach pain or cramp
- Loose stools or diarrhoea
- Nausea or vomiting
  - Take the medication with or after food to reduce nausea

If any of the above side effects persist, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

## **What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?**

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

Some rare but serious side effects of this medicine include:

- Tingling or numbness in your fingers or toes
- Unusual bleeding or bruises
- Unexplained muscle pain or weakness
- Dark-colored urine

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

## **What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?**

Avoid taking grapefruit or grapefruit juice while you are taking this medication as grapefruit might cause the amount of colchicine to increase in your body. Large amount of colchicine can cause serious side effects.

Certain cholesterol-lowering, antibiotics, and hepatitis medications may cause the amount of colchicine to increase in your body that results in an increased risk of side effects.

Check with your healthcare professionals if you are taking any of the above medication.

## How should I store this medication?

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

## How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

### Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

*This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.*

*Last updated on Sept 2021*



The image shows two overlapping smartphone screens. The foreground screen displays a 'COVID-19 Records' app interface for a user named WONG HOCK CHUAN (SXXXX155G). It features a 'Switch profile' icon and a 'Vaccination Records' section with an illustration of a family and a 'Vaccinated' status effective from 23 Apr 2021. The background screen shows an 'APPOINTMENT' screen for the same user.

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