

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Febuxostat



What is Febuxostat?

- Febuxostat is a medication used to treat gout – a condition where high uric acid (a form of waste product from the body) crystallises to deposit in the skin and joints, causing joint inflammation, or medically known as a gout attack.
- Febuxostat treats gout by reducing your **body's** production of uric acid, hence lowering high levels of uric acid in the body.
- Febuxostat is used for the long-term control of gout. It does not treat acute gout or cure gout.
- Long-term treatment with Febuxostat usually results in various benefits which may include:
 - Less frequent gout attacks
 - Reducing uric acid crystals in the joints and skin (known as tophi)

How is Febuxostat Taken?

- Febuxostat tablet is taken orally, with or without food.
- The usual dose of Febuxostat ranges from 40mg to 80mg per day. Doses of up to 120mg per day may be used.

What Should I do if I Miss a Dose?

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, take only the usual dose. Never take a double dosage of medication to make up for the missed dose.

How Long Does it Take for Febuxostat to be Effective?

- Febuxostat does not work immediately, thus it is important that you take your medication regularly or you may not benefit from Febuxostat.
- You may experience an increase in the number of gout attacks during the first few months after taking Febuxostat. However, with regular use of Febuxostat, the attacks will gradually reduce in frequency and become less painful. After several months of treatment, the attacks may also stop completely.

Can Febuxostat be Taken With Other Medications?

- Febuxostat can be taken together with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and other gout medications e.g. Colchicine.
- Febuxostat should NOT be taken with Azathioprine as it may interfere with removal of Azathioprine from the body, increasing its immunosuppressive effects as well as side effects.
- Please inform your doctor, pharmacist or rheumatology nurse clinician if you are taking other medications including over-the-counter medicines, supplements and traditional/herbal remedies as they may affect the way you benefit from Febuxostat.

What Dietary Changes Should I Make?

- Avoid alcohol intake as it may increase the uric acid level in your blood, triggering acute gout attacks.
- Reduce intake of food and beverages with high fructose content (e.g. soft drinks), and food high in purine content (e.g. organ meats).

Should I Continue or Stop Febuxostat During an Acute Attack of Gout?

- If you have already been taking Febuxostat, you should continue taking it during an acute attack of gout together with the other medications for the acute gout.

What are the Important Side Effects of Febuxostat?

- Febuxostat is generally well tolerated. However, certain unwanted side effects may occur, sometimes even after months or years. Always discuss with your doctor if you experience any side effects.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Loss of appetite • Diarrhoea • Constipation 	<p>Usually mild and short lasting. Take medication after food to minimise the side effects. Sucking hard, sugar-free candy may reduce nausea.</p> <p>Inform your doctor if symptoms are severe or if you experience loss of appetite.</p>
<p>Headache and fatigue</p>	<p>Usually mild and short lasting, generally improves as you get used to the medication.</p>
<p>Liver disorder Warning signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellowing of eye whites or skin • Dark or tea-coloured urine • Constant abdominal pain 	<p>Consult your doctor immediately. Your doctor will do blood tests to check if this occurs.</p>
<p>Skin reaction (Rare but severe side effect) Warning signs: Varies across individuals and may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hives • Itching • Flushing red or purple spots • Lip or mouth ulcers 	<p>Stop the medication and consult your doctor immediately.</p>

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

Side Effects	Management
--------------	------------

- As with all medications, it is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- You should NOT take Febuxostat if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

What Type of Monitoring do I Require While I am Taking Febuxostat?

- Your doctor will check your blood tests regularly to monitor for side effects from Febuxostat. In addition, to check that Febuxostat is working, uric acid blood tests should be done regularly to monitor the effectiveness of Febuxostat on reducing uric acid levels.

How do I Store Febuxostat?

- Febuxostat should be stored in the original packaging and protected from light. Store it in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or rheumatology nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.



© Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore 2018. All rights reserved. All information correct as of June 2018. No part of this document may be reproduced, copied, reverse compiled, adapted, distributed, commercially exploited, displayed or stored in a database, retrieval system or transmitted in any form without prior permission of Tan Tock Seng Hospital. All information and material found in this document are for purposes of information only and are not meant to substitute any advice provided by your own physician or other medical professionals.

PECC-PHA-ED-2018-235-v1