

## PHARMACY

### Drug Information

# Febuxostat



### What Is Febuxostat?

- Febuxostat is a tablet medication that reduces the level of uric acid (body's waste product) in the blood. High levels of uric acid in the blood can cause pain and swelling in the joints (known as gout attack).
- Febuxostat is used for the long-term control of gout. However, it does not treat acute (short-term) gout attack or cure gout.
- You may experience benefits from long-term treatment with Febuxostat, such as:
  - Fewer gout attacks
  - Fewer uric acid crystals in the joints and skin, leading to fewer bumps in the skin known as tophi

### How Is Febuxostat Taken?

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

### 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 takes times to work. It is important that you take your Febuxostat regularly to benefit fully from the medication.
- You may experience more gout attacks during the first few months after taking Febuxostat. However, taking Febuxostat regularly will reduce the number of gout attacks and make them 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 (a medication that keeps your immune system in check). This may affect 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 as they may affect way you benefit from Febuxostat. These include over-the-counter medications, supplements and traditional/herbal remedies.

### 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 sugar (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 are already taking Febuxostat, 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, some side effects may occur only after months or years of taking Febuxostat. Always discuss with your doctor if you experience any side effects.

Side Effects	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Diarrhoea</li> <li>• Constipation</li> </ul>	<p>Usually mild and short-lasting.</p> <p>Take medication after food to reduce the side effects. Sucking hard, sugar-free candy may reduce nausea.</p>

	Inform your doctor if symptoms are severe or if you experience loss of appetite.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> </ul>	<p>Usually mild and short-lasting.</p> <p>These side effects generally improve as you get used to the medication.</p>
<p>Liver disorder</p> <p><u>Warning Signs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellowing of eye whites or skin</li> <li>• Dark or tea-coloured urine</li> <li>• Constant abdominal pain</li> </ul>	<p>Consult your doctor immediately.</p> <p>You will have to do blood tests to check your liver function.</p>
<p>Skin reaction (Rare but severe side effect)</p> <p><u>Warning Signs (may vary across individuals)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hives</li> <li>• Itching</li> <li>• Flushing red or purple spots on skin</li> <li>• Lip or mouth ulcers</li> </ul>	<p>Stop the medication and consult your doctor <b>immediately</b>.</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?

- Do 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 Check-Ups Do I Need While Taking Febuxostat?

- You will have to do blood tests regularly to check for side effects from Febuxostat.
- Uric acid blood tests should also be done regularly to check that Febuxostat is effective in 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.



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PECC-PHA-ED-2022-1495-v1