



# Reximed<sup>®</sup> 50

## Methotrexate

### Solution for Injection

Administration: Intravenous, Intramuscular, Intra-arterial or Intrathecal

Read all of this leaflet carefully for complete instruction

### 1. INDICATIONS AND USAGE

#### Neoplastic Diseases

Methotrexate is indicated in the treatment of gestational choriocarcinoma, choriocarcinoma destruens and hydatidiform mole.

In acute lymphocytic leukemia, methotrexate is indicated in the prophylaxis of meningeal leukemia and is used in maintenance therapy in combination with other chemotherapeutic agents. Methotrexate is also indicated in the treatment of meningeal leukemia.

Methotrexate is used alone or in combination with other anticancer agents in the treatment of breast cancer, epidermoid cancers of the head and neck, advanced mycosis fungoides (cutaneous T cell lymphoma), and lung cancer, particularly squamous cell and small cell types. Methotrexate is also used in combination with other chemotherapeutic agents in the treatment of advanced stage non-Hodgkin's lymphomas.

Methotrexate in high doses followed by leucovorin rescue in combination with other chemotherapeutic agents is effective in prolonging relapse-free survival in patients with non-metastatic osteosarcoma who have undergone surgical resection or amputation for the primary tumor.

#### Psoriasis

Methotrexate is indicated in the symptomatic control of severe, recalcitrant, disabling psoriasis that is not adequately responsive to other forms of therapy, but only when the diagnosis has been established, as by biopsy and/or after dermatologic consultation. It is important to ensure that a psoriasis "flare" is not due to an undiagnosed concomitant disease affecting immune responses.

#### Rheumatoid Arthritis including Polyarticular-Course Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis

Methotrexate is indicated in the management of selected adults with severe, active rheumatoid arthritis (ACR criteria), or children with active polyarticular-course juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, who have had an insufficient therapeutic response to, or are intolerant of, an adequate trial of first-line therapy including full dose non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents (NSAIDs).

Aspirin, (NSAIDs), and/or low dose steroids may be continued, although the possibility of increased toxicity with concomitant use of NSAIDs including salicylates has not been fully explored. Steroids may be reduced gradually in patients who respond to methotrexate. Combined use of methotrexate with gold, penicillamine, hydroxychloroquine, sulfasalazine, or cytotoxic agents, has not been studied and may increase the incidence of adverse effects. Rest and physiotherapy as indicated should be continued.

### 2. DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

#### Neoplastic Diseases

Oral administration in tablet form is often preferred when low doses are being administered since absorption is rapid and effective serum levels are obtained. Methotrexate Injection, (preservative free) formulations may be given by the intramuscular, intravenous, intra-arterial or intrathecal route. Parenteral drug products should be inspected visually for particulate matter and discoloration prior to administration, whenever solution and container permit.

#### Choriocarcinoma and similar trophoblastic diseases

Methotrexate is administered orally or intramuscularly in doses of 15 to 30 mg daily for a 5-day course. Such courses are usually repeated for 3 to 5 times as required, with rest periods of one or more weeks interspersed between courses, until any manifesting toxic symptoms subside. The effectiveness of therapy is ordinarily evaluated by 24 hour quantitative analysis of urinary chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), which should return to normal or less than 50 IU/24 hr usually after the third or fourth course and usually be followed by a complete resolution of measurable lesions in 4 to 6 weeks. One to two courses of methotrexate after normalization of hCG is usually recommended. Before each course of the drug careful clinical assessment is essential. Cyclic combination therapy of methotrexate with other antitumor drugs has been reported as being useful.

Since hydatidiform mole may precede choriocarcinoma, prophylactic chemotherapy with methotrexate has been recommended.

Choriocarcinoma destruens is considered to be an invasive form of hydatidiform mole.

Methotrexate is administered in these disease states in doses similar to those recommended for choriocarcinoma.

#### Leukemia

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia in pediatric patients and young adolescents is the most responsive to present day chemotherapy. In young adults and older patients, clinical remission is more difficult to obtain and early relapse is more common.

Methotrexate alone or in combination with steroids was used initially for induction of remission in acute lymphoblastic leukemias. More recently corticosteroid therapy, in combination with other antileukemic drugs or in cyclic combinations with methotrexate included, has appeared to produce rapid and effective remissions.

When used for induction, methotrexate in doses of 3.3 mg/m<sup>2</sup> in combination with 60 mg/m<sup>2</sup> of prednisone, given daily, produced remissions in 50% of patients treated, usually within a period of 4 to 6 weeks. Methotrexate in combination with other agents appears to be the drug of choice for securing maintenance of drug-induced remissions. When remission is achieved and supportive care has produced general clinical improvement, maintenance therapy is initiated, as follows: Methotrexate is administered 2 times weekly either by mouth or intramuscularly in total weekly doses of 30 mg/m<sup>2</sup>. It has also been given in doses of 2.5 mg/kg intravenously every 14 days. If and when relapse does occur, reduction of remission can again usually be obtained by repeating the initial induction regimen.

A variety of combination chemotherapy regimens have been used for both induction and maintenance therapy in acute lymphoblastic leukemia. The physician should be familiar with the new advances in antileukemic therapy.

#### Meningeal Leukemia

In the treatment of prophylaxis of meningeal leukemia, methotrexate must be administered intrathecally. Preservative free methotrexate is diluted to a concentration of 1 mg/mL in an appropriate sterile, preservative free medium such as 0.9% Sodium Chloride Injection.

The cerebrospinal fluid volume is dependent on age and not on body surface area. The CSF is at 40% of the adult volume at birth and reaches the adult volume in several years.

Intrathecal methotrexate administration at a dose of 12 mg/m<sup>2</sup> (maximum 15 mg) has been reported to result in low CSF methotrexate concentrations and reduced efficacy in pediatric patients and high concentrations and neurotoxicity in adults. The following dosage regimen is based on age instead of body surface area:

AGE (years)	DOSE (mg)
<1	6
1	8
2	10
3 or older	12

Because the CSF volume and turnover may decrease with age, a dose reduction may be indicated in elderly patients. For treatment of meningeal leukemia, intrathecal methotrexate may be given at intervals of 2 to 5 days. However, administration at intervals of less than one week may result in increased subacute toxicity. Methotrexate is administered until the cell count of the cerebrospinal fluid returns to normal. At this point one additional dose is advisable. For prophylaxis against meningeal leukemia, the dosage is the same as for treatment except for the intervals of administration. On this subject, it is advisable for the physician to consult the medical literature.

Untoward side effects may occur when any given intrathecal injection and are commonly neurological in character. Large doses may cause convulsions. Methotrexate given by the intrathecal route appears significantly in the systemic circulation and may cause systemic methotrexate toxicity. Therefore, systemic antileukemic therapy with the drug should be appropriately adjusted, reduced

or discontinued. Focal leukemic involvement of the central nervous system may not respond to intrathecal chemotherapy and is best treated with radiotherapy.

#### Lymphomas

In Burkitt's tumor, Stages I to II, methotrexate has produced prolonged remissions in some cases. Recommended dosage is 10 to 25 mg/day orally for 4 to 8 days. In Stage III, methotrexate is commonly given concomitantly with other antitumor agents. Treatment in all stages usually consists of several courses of the drug interspersed with 7 to 10 day rest periods. Lymphosarcomas in Stage III may respond to combined drug therapy with methotrexate given in doses of 0.625 to 2.5 mg/kg daily.

#### Mycosis fungoides (cutaneous T cell lymphoma)

Therapy with methotrexate as a single agent appears to produce clinical responses in up to 50% of patients treated. Dosage in early stages is usually 5 mg to 50 mg once weekly. Dose reduction or cessation is guided by patient response and hematologic monitoring. Methotrexate has also been administered twice weekly in doses ranging from 15 mg to 37.5 mg in patients who have responded poorly to weekly therapy. Combination chemotherapy regimens that include intravenous methotrexate administered at higher doses with leucovorin rescue have been utilized in advanced stages of the disease.

#### Osteosarcoma

An effective adjuvant chemotherapy regimen requires the administration of several cytotoxic chemotherapeutic agents. In addition to high-dose methotrexate with leucovorin rescue, these agents may include doxorubicin, cisplatin, and the combination of bleomycin, cyclophosphamide and dactinomycin (BCD) in the doses and schedule shown in the table below. The starting dose for high-dose methotrexate treatment is 12 g/m<sup>2</sup>. If this dose is not sufficient to produce a peak serum methotrexate concentration of 1,000 micromolar (10<sup>-3</sup> mol/l) at the end of the methotrexate infusion, the dose may be escalated to 15 g/m<sup>2</sup> in subsequent treatments. If the patient is vomiting or is unable to tolerate oral medication, leucovorin is given IV or IM at the same dose and schedule.

Drug*	Dose*	Treatment Week After Surgery
Methotrexate	12 g/m <sup>2</sup> IV as 4 hour infusion (starting dose)	4,5,6,7,11 12,15,16,29 30,44,45
	15 mg orally every six hours for 10 doses starting at 24 hours after start of methotrexate infusion	...
Doxorubicin† as a single drug	30 mg/m <sup>2</sup> IV x 3 days	8,17
Doxorubicin †	50 mg/m <sup>2</sup> IV	20,23,33,36
Cisplatin †	100 mg/m <sup>2</sup> IV	20,23,33,36
Bleomycin †	15 units/m <sup>2</sup> IV x 2 days	2,13,26,39,42
Cyclophosphamide †	600 mg/m <sup>2</sup> IV x 2 days	2,13,26,39,42
Dactinomycin †	0.6 mg/m <sup>2</sup> IV x 2 days	2,13,26,39,42

\*Link MP, Goorin AM, Miser AW, et al: The effect of adjuvant chemotherapy on relapse-free survival in patients with osteosarcoma of the extremity. N Engl J of Med 1986; 314 (No.25): 1600-1606.

†See each respective package insert for full prescribing information. Dosage modifications may be necessary because of drug-induced toxicity.

When these higher doses of methotrexate are to be administered, the following safety guidelines should be closely observed.

### 3. DOSAGE FORMS AND STRENGTHS

Reximed<sup>®</sup> is available as a preservative-free, sterile, clear, yellow, and free of particulate matter solution. Each 2 ml vial contains 50 mg methotrexate (25 mg/ml).

### 4. CONTRAINDICATIONS

- Patients with a known hypersensitivity to methotrexate.
- Nursing mothers.
- Severe liver impairment.
- Severe renal impairment (Creatinine clearance less than 20 ml/min).
- Serious, acute or chronic infections such as tuberculosis and HIV.
- Ulcers of the oral cavity and known active gastrointestinal ulcer disease.
- Concurrent vaccination with live vaccines.
- An increased risk of hepatitis has been reported to result from combined use of methotrexate and etretinate. Therefore, the combination of methotrexate and acitretin is also contraindicated.
- In women of childbearing potential until pregnancy is excluded.
- Concomitant use with nitrous oxide anesthesia.
- Radiotherapy to the central nervous system should not be given concurrently with intrathecal methotrexate.
- Methotrexate is contraindicated in pregnant women with psoriasis or rheumatoid arthritis and should be used in the treatment of neoplastic diseases only when the potential benefit outweighs the risk to the fetus (see section 8.2).
- Patients with psoriasis or rheumatoid arthritis with alcoholism, alcoholic liver disease or other chronic liver disease should not receive methotrexate.
- Patients with psoriasis or rheumatoid arthritis who have overt or laboratory evidence of immunodeficiency syndromes should not receive methotrexate.
- Patients with psoriasis or rheumatoid arthritis who have preexisting blood dyscrasias, such as bone marrow hypoplasia, leukopenia, thrombocytopenia, or significant anemia, should not receive methotrexate.

### 5. WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

#### General

Methotrexate has the potential for serious toxicity. Toxic effects may be related in frequency and severity to dose or frequency of administration but have been seen at all doses. Because they can occur at any time during therapy, it is necessary to follow patients on methotrexate closely. Most adverse reactions are reversible if detected early. When such reactions do occur, the drug should be reduced in dosage or discontinued and appropriate corrective measures should be taken. If necessary, this could include the use of leucovorin calcium and/or acute, intermittent hemodialysis with a high-flux dialyzer. If methotrexate therapy is reinstated, it should be carried out with caution, with adequate consideration of further need for the drug and increased alertness as to possible recurrence of toxicity. The clinical pharmacology of methotrexate has not been well studied in older individuals. Due to diminished hepatic and renal function as well as decreased folate stores in this population, relatively low doses should be considered, and these patients should be closely monitored for early signs of toxicity.

Some of the effects, such as dizziness and fatigue, may affect the ability to drive or operate machinery.

#### Information for Patients

Patients should be informed of the early signs and symptoms of toxicity, of the need to see their physician promptly if they occur, and the need for close follow-up, including periodic laboratory tests to monitor toxicity.

Both the physician and pharmacist should emphasize to the patient that the recommended dose is taken weekly in rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis, and that mistaken daily use of the recommended dose has led to fatal toxicity. Prescriptions should not be written or refilled on a PRN basis.

Patients should be informed of the potential benefit and risk in the use of methotrexate. The risk of effects on reproduction should be discussed with both male and female patients taking methotrexate.

#### Laboratory Tests

Patients undergoing methotrexate therapy should be closely monitored so that toxic effects are detected promptly. Baseline assessment should include a complete blood count with differential and platelet counts, hepatic enzymes, renal function tests and a chest X-ray. During therapy of rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis, monitoring of these parameters is recommended: hematology at least monthly, renal function and liver function every 1 to 2 months. More frequent monitoring is usually indicated during antineoplastic therapy. During initial or changing doses, or during periods of increased risk of elevated methotrexate blood levels (e.g., dehydration), more frequent monitoring may also be indicated.

Transient liver function test abnormalities are observed

frequently after methotrexate administration and are usually not cause for modification of methotrexate therapy. Persistent liver function test abnormalities, and/or depression of serum albumin may be indicators of serious liver toxicity and require evaluation.

A relationship between abnormal liver function tests and fibrosis or cirrhosis of the liver has not been established for patients with psoriasis. Persistent abnormalities in liver function tests may precede appearance of fibrosis or cirrhosis in the rheumatoid arthritis population. Pulmonary function tests may be useful if methotrexate-induced lung disease is suspected, especially if baseline measurements are available.

#### Other precautions

Methotrexate should be used with extreme caution in the presence of debility.

Methotrexate exits slowly from third space compartments (e.g., pleural effusions or ascites). This results in a prolonged terminal plasma half-life and unexpected toxicity. In patients with significant third space accumulations, it is advisable to evacuate the fluid before treatment and to monitor plasma methotrexate levels.

Lesions of psoriasis may be aggravated by concomitant exposure to ultraviolet radiation. Radiation dermatitis and sunburn may be "recalled" by the use of methotrexate.

Vitamin preparations or other products containing folic acid, folic acid or their derivatives may decrease the effectiveness of methotrexate.

### 6. ADVERSE REACTIONS

The following adverse reactions vary by route, dosage, and indication.

#### >10%

**Gastrointestinal:** Diarrhea (≤1%), nausea (≤11%), vomiting (≤11%)

**Hepatic:** Increased liver enzymes (14% to 15%)

#### 1% to 10%:

**Dermatologic:** Alopecia (≤10%), burning sensation of skin (psoriasis: 3% to 10%), dermatitis (rheumatoid arthritis: 1% to 3%), pruritus (rheumatoid arthritis: 1% to 3%), skin photosensitivity (3% to 10%), skin rash (≤3%)

**Gastrointestinal:** Stomatitis (2% to 10%)

**Hematologic & oncologic:** Leukopenia (1% to 10%; WBC <3000/mm<sup>3</sup>), pancytopenia (rheumatoid arthritis: 1% to 3%), thrombocytopenia (rheumatoid arthritis: 3% to 10%; platelet count <100,000/mm<sup>3</sup>)

**Nervous system:** Dizziness (≤3%), headache (polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis: 1%)

**Respiratory:** Interstitial pneumonitis (rheumatoid arthritis: 1%)

#### Frequency not defined:

**Cardiovascular:** Arterial thrombosis, cerebral thrombosis, chest pain, deep vein thrombosis, hypotension, pericardial effusion, pericarditis, pulmonary embolism, retinal thrombosis, thrombophlebitis, vasculitis

**Dermatologic:** Acne vulgaris, dermal ulcer, diaphoresis, dyschromia, ecchymosis, erythema multiforme, erythematous rash, exacerbation of psoriasis (plaque erosion), exfoliative dermatitis, furunculosis, skin abnormalities related to radiation recall, skin necrosis, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, telangiectasia, toxic epidermal necrolysis, urticaria

**Endocrine & metabolic:** Decreased libido, decreased serum albumin, diabetes mellitus, gynecostasia, menstrual disease

**Gastrointestinal:** Abdominal distress, anorexia, aphthous stomatitis, enteritis, gastrointestinal hemorrhage, gastrointestinal ulcer, gingivitis, hematemesis, intestinal perforation, melena, pancreatitis

**Genitourinary:** Azotemia, cystitis, defective oogenesis, defective spermatogenesis, dysuria, hematuria, impotence, infertility, oligospermia, proteinuria, vaginal discharge

**Hematologic & oncologic:** Agranulocytosis, aplastic anemia, bone marrow depression (nadir: 7 to 10 days), eosinophilia, hypogammaglobulinemia, lymphadenopathy, lymphoproliferative disorder, malignant lymphoma, neutropenia, tumor lysis syndrome

**Hepatic:** Hepatic failure, hepatitis (acute)

**Hypersensitivity:** Nonimmune anaphylaxis

**Infection:** Cryptococcosis, cytomegalovirus disease (including cytomegaloviral pneumonia), herpes simplex infection, herpes zoster, histoplasmosis, infection, nocardiosis, sepsis, vaccinia (disseminated); following smallpox immunization)

**Nervous system:** Abnormal cranial sensation (has been reported at low dosage), aphasia, chemical arachnoiditis (intrathecal; acute), chills, cognitive dysfunction (has been reported at low dosage), drowsiness, dysarthria, fatigue, hemiparesis, leukoencephalopathy (may be chronic), malaise, mood changes (has been reported at low dosage), paresis, seizure, severe neurotoxicity (reported with unexpectedly increased frequency among pediatric patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia who were treated with intermediate-dose intravenous methotrexate), speech disturbance

**Neuromuscular & skeletal:** Arthralgia, bone fracture (stress), myalgia, myelopathy (intrathecal; acute), osteonecrosis (with radiotherapy), osteoporosis

**Ophthalmic:** Blurred vision, conjunctivitis, eye pain, transient blindness

**Otic:** Tinnitus

**Respiratory:** Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cough, epistaxis, pharyngitis, pneumonia, pulmonary alveolitis, pulmonary fibrosis, respiratory failure, upper respiratory tract infection

**Miscellaneous:** Fever, nodule, tissue necrosis (with radiotherapy)

#### Postmarketing:

**Cardiovascular:** Cerebrovascular accident

**Dermatologic:** Palmar-plantar erythrodysesthesia, papular rash, photodermatitis (reactivation)

**Gastrointestinal:** Mesenteric ischemia (acute)

**Hematologic & oncologic:** Severe anemia (after 2 years of low-dose methotrexate: more frequent: ≥4% to <10%), skin carcinoma

**Hepatic:** Exacerbation of hepatitis B, hepatic cirrhosis (chronic therapy; varies from rare [ $<1\%$ ] to common [ $\geq 10\%$ ]), hepatic fibrosis (chronic therapy; more frequent: ≥4% to <10%), hepatotoxicity (in patients treated with 1, 2, or 5 g/m<sup>2</sup>, grades ≥3: common: ≥10%)

**Hypersensitivity:** Anaphylaxis, angioedema

**Ophthalmic:** Eye irritation, optic neuropathy, xerophthalmia

**Renal:** Acute kidney injury (varies with dose; common [ $\geq 10\%$ ] to less frequent [ $\geq 1\%$  to <4%])

**Respiratory:** Acute respiratory distress, Mycobacterium avium complex, pleuritic chest pain, pneumonia due to Pneumocystis, tuberculosis

### 7. DRUG INTERACTIONS

#### Risk X (Avoid Combination):

Acitretin, BCG (Intravesical), Cladribine, Dichlorophenamide, Dipyrone, Foscamet, Natalizumab, Nitrous Oxide, Pimecrolimus, Tacrolimus (Topical), Talmogene Laherparepex

#### Risk D (Consider therapy modification):

Alcohol (Ethyl), Baricitinib, Delineprone, Dexametoprolfen, Echinacea, Fingolimod, Lenograstim, Lipeglirastim, Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Agents, Palifermin, Probenecid, Proton Pump Inhibitors, Rabies Vaccine, Rotavirus, Salicylates, Sulfonamide I, Sulfonamide Antibiotics, Trimethoprim, Vaccines (Inactivated), Vaccines (Live)

#### Risk C (Monitor therapy):

5-Aminosalicylic Acid Derivatives, Alectrinoin (Systemic), Bile Acid Sequestrants, Cephalothin, Chloramphenicol (Ophthalmic), Ciprofloxacin (Systemic), Clozapine, Coccidioides immitis Skin Test, Cola-Containing Drinks, COVID-19 Vaccine (Adenovirus Vector), COVID-19 Vaccine (Inactivated Virus), COVID-19 Vaccine (mRNA), Cyclosporine (Systemic), Demosumab, Diethylamine Salicylate, Eltrombopag, Fosphenytoin, Phenytoin, Gemfibrozil, Ibrutinib, Inebilizumab, Leflunomide, Levetiracetam, Loop Diuretics, Mercaptopurine, Mesalamine, Mipomersen, Neomycin, Nitisinone, Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Agents (Topical), Ocrelizumab, Ozanimod, Pencicillin, Pidotimod, Premetomidin, Promazine, Proton Pump Inhibitors, Pyrimethamine, Sapropterin, Siponimod, Sulfasalazine, Tegafur, Terfenadine, Tertotomid, Theophylline Derivatives, Tofacitinib, Upadacitinib, Voriconazole

### 8. USE IN SPECIAL POPULATIONS

#### 8.1. Fertility

Methotrexate affects spermatogenesis and oogenesis and may decrease fertility. In humans, methotrexate has been reported to cause oligospermia, menstrual dysfunction and amenorrhoea. These effects appear to be reversible after discontinuation of therapy in most cases. In oncologic