

LEUKERAN[®]

chlorambucil tablets 2 mg

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about LEUKERAN tablets. It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the expected benefits of you taking LEUKERAN against the risks this medicine could have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with your medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What LEUKERAN is used for

LEUKERAN contains the active ingredient chlorambucil which belongs to a group of medicines called anti-neoplastic agents. Within this group, LEUKERAN belongs to a class of medicines called alkylating agents.

LEUKERAN is used to treat Hodgkin's disease, certain forms of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, Waldenstrom's macroglobulinaemia, advanced ovarian cancer and a proportion of patients with advanced breast cancer. These are all types of cancer which happen when abnormal cells are formed and multiply uncontrollably, crowding out and interfering with the vital functions of normal healthy cells.

LEUKERAN works by stopping the growth of cancer cells.

Use in children

LEUKERAN is sometimes used to treat children with Hodgkin's disease or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

This medicine is often given in combination with other medicines used to treat the above conditions.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why LEUKERAN has been prescribed for you.

Your doctor may have prescribed LEUKERAN for another purpose.

It is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take it

When you must not take it

Do not take LEUKERAN if:

- you have ever had an allergic reaction before to chlorambucil or to any of the ingredients in LEUKERAN listed at the end of this leaflet
- the package is torn or shows signs of interference, or if the tablets appear to be broken, damaged or discoloured
- the expiry date on the pack has passed. If you take this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well. If the pharmacist has repacked the medicine for you, there may not be an expiry date on the pack.

Before you start taking it

Tell your doctor if:

- **you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant or plan to father a child.**

LEUKERAN may be harmful to the sperm, eggs and/or an unborn baby.

Reliable contraceptive precautions must be taken to avoid pregnancy whilst you or your partner is taking these tablets. If you are already pregnant, your doctor will weigh up the expected benefits of LEUKERAN to you against the possible risks to your unborn baby.

- **you are breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed.**

The active ingredient in LEUKERAN, chlorambucil, may pass into breast milk, so mothers taking LEUKERAN should not breastfeed.

- **you have a history of seizure disorders**
- **you have recently been vaccinated or are planning to be vaccinated with a 'live' vaccine.**
- **you have recently had a course of radiotherapy or any other treatment for cancer.**
- **you have any other health problems, especially:**
 - liver disease
 - kidney disease.
- **you are allergic to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.**

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start taking LEUKERAN.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including the oral contraceptive pill or medicines you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may affect the way others work. You may need to take different amounts of your medicine or you may need to take different medicines. These include:

- vaccinations with 'live' organism vaccines.

Depending on the type of cancer you have, your doctor may prescribe LEUKERAN in combination with other medicines used to treat cancer.

How to take it

How much to take

Take LEUKERAN exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

Your doctor will tell you how many LEUKERAN tablets to take each day.

Your doctor will calculate the dose based on your weight, the type of cancer and your response to LEUKERAN. If you have pre-existing liver problems, your doctor may decide to reduce your dose.

Never take more tablets than your doctor has prescribed.

Your doctor may do regular blood tests to make sure that LEUKERAN is working for you.

How to take it

Swallow tablets whole with a glass of water.

Do not crush or divide the tablets.

Continue taking LEUKERAN until your doctor tells you to stop.

On average, LEUKERAN is taken for about 4 to 8 weeks, depending on the type of cancer you have.

Your doctor may do some blood tests to check that your kidneys are working properly and that your blood counts are normal.

When to take it

Take your dose on an empty stomach at least 1 hour before or 3 hours after food or milk.

If you forget to take it

Do not take an extra dose. Wait until the next dose and take your normal dose then.

Do not try to make up for the dose that you missed by taking more than one dose at a time.

If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the National Poisons Information Centre (0800 POISON or 0800 764 766) for advice, or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else has taken too much LEUKERAN. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Symptoms of overdose include being agitated, having convulsions, and/or becoming unsteady while walking.

While you are taking it

Things you must do

Tell all doctors, dentists and pharmacists treating you that you are taking LEUKERAN.

Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while taking LEUKERAN.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken LEUKERAN exactly as prescribed.

Otherwise, your doctor may think it is not working for you and change your medicine unnecessarily.

Tell your doctor if you feel that the tablets are not helping your condition.

As with all medicines used to treat cancer, you should use reliable contraception when

taking LEUKERAN, whether you are male or female.

Be sure to keep all your appointments with your doctor so that your progress can be checked.

Things you must not do

Do not stop taking LEUKERAN or change the dose without first checking with your doctor.

Do not let yourself run out of medicine over the weekend or on holidays.

Do not give LEUKERAN to anyone else even if they have the same condition as you.

Do not take any other medicines whether they require a prescription or not without first asking your doctor or a pharmacist.

Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how LEUKERAN affects you.

Side effects

Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking LEUKERAN.

All medicines can have unwanted side effects. Sometimes they may be serious, but often they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

If you think that LEUKERAN may be causing you to have an allergic (hypersensitivity) reaction, TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.

Symptoms include:

- a skin reaction (i.e. rash or 'hives')
- swelling of the face, lips, mouth or throat
- difficulty breathing or swallowing
- fever
- low blood pressure (feeling dizzy and faint).

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following:

- diarrhoea
- nausea (feeling as if you are about to vomit), vomiting
- tiredness/fatigue
- mouth ulcers
- skin rash
- fever, chills
- headache
- dizziness
- shortness of breath
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- liver problems (feeling tired and weak)
- bladder problems/infections
- numbness or weakness of the arms or legs
- seizures, tremors (shakiness), twitching
- in women, changes in the menstrual cycle.

Your doctor can prescribe helpful medication or change the dose of this medicine if you experience any of the above side effects.

LEUKERAN may affect both male and female fertility. Your doctor should discuss this with you.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if you think the problems are not connected with this medicine and are not referred to in this list.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some people.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You might not experience any of them.

After taking it

Storage

Keep your tablets in the bottle until it is time to take them.

If you take the tablets out of the bottle they may not keep as well.

Store LEUKERAN in the refrigerator, where the temperature stays between 2°C and 8°C. Do not freeze.

Keep it where young children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one and a half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking LEUKERAN, or the medicine has passed its expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any tablets that are left over.

Product description

What it looks like

LEUKERAN 2 mg are brown film-coated, round, biconvex tablets engraved with 'GX EG3' on one face and "L" on the other face. Available in bottles containing 25 tablets.

Ingredients

Active ingredient:

Each tablet contains 2 mg chlorambucil.

Inactive ingredients:

- microcrystalline cellulose
- anhydrous lactose
- silica colloidal anhydrous
- stearic acid
- hypromellose
- titanium dioxide
- iron oxide yellow
- iron oxide red
- macrogol 400.

Distributor

Distributed in New Zealand by:

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