**Patient Education**

## Leucovorin (loo-koe-VOR-in)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Names</th>
<th>Folinic acid, citrovorum factor, or 5-formyl tetrahydrofolate. (There may be other names for this medication)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is it Administered?</td>
<td>This medication comes as a tablet to be taken by mouth, and a liquid that can be infused through an IV (intravenous) or injected into a muscle (intramuscular or IM injection).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Am I Taking Leucovorin?</td>
<td>Leucovorin reduces the side effects of methotrexate and enhances the effects of fluorouracil (5-FU).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Does Leucovorin Work?</td>
<td>Leucovorin is in a class of medications called folic acid (vitamin B12) analogs. It works by protecting healthy cells from the effects of some drugs, such as methotrexate. In the case of 5FU, it allows that medication to stay in the cells longer. The hope is that 5-FU will have more anticancer effect if it stays in the cancel cells longer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin Receiving Leucovorin? | Tell your doctor if you:  
  • are allergic to leucovorin, or folic acid (Folicet, in multi-vitamins)  
  • have anemia (low red blood cell count) caused by lack of vitamin B12 or an inability to absorb vitamin B12  
  • have or have ever had kidney disease, or a buildup of fluid in the chest or stomach areas  
  • are nauseated  
  • are pregnant or breastfeeding |

This medication may interact with other medications, increasing or decreasing their effectiveness or causing harmful side effects. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal or diet supplements that you are taking.
What Are Some Possible Side Effects I May Experience?

Leucovorin by itself has very few side effects when taken with methotrexate. You may notice side effects when taken with 5-FU; these are usually side effects from the 5-FU.

When Should I Call the Doctor?

**Call your doctor immediately if you experience:**
- any sign of an allergic reaction: itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing, dizziness, or palpitations

What Else Do I Need to Know About Leucovorin?

- Drink 2-3 quarts of fluid (particularly water) every day (24 hours)
- Do not take aspirin or products that contain aspirin unless your doctor gives you permission.
- If you take the tablet form, store the tablets at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light (not in the bathroom).
- Though rare, nausea and vomiting have been reported by people taking leucovorin. Usually, side effects are due to the other drugs being taken, not from the leucovorin.
- Do not get pregnant or father a child while taking this medication. Barrier methods of contraception, such as condoms, are recommended. This drug may be harmful to a fetus.
- Do not breastfeed while you taking leucovorin
- Keep all your appointments with your doctor and your laboratory.
- If you have any additional questions about leucovorin, please ask your doctor.