Allopurinol

PHARMACY INFO SHEET

BC Renal Agency
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

WHAT IT DOES:

Allopurinol is used to prevent gout attacks and to reduce further loss of kidney function.

HOW IT WORKS:

It works by causing less uric acid to be produced by the body. It will not relieve a gout attack that has already started. It only works after you have been taking it regularly for a few months.

HOW TO TAKE IT:

Allopurinol should be taken regularly to prevent gout attacks and to reduce further loss of kidney function. Even if you take another medication during a gout attack, continue to also take allopurinol.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU MISS A DOSE:

If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember *unless it is*:

1. less than 6 hours before your next single daily dose OR
2. less than 3 hours before your next multiple daily dose.

In these cases omit the missed dose and resume your regular dosing schedule with the next dose.
DO NOT DOUBLE YOUR DOSE OR TRY TO "CATCH UP" BY TAKING EXTRA DOSES.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS:

Skin rash, hives or itching, sore throat, fever, weakness, unusual bruising or bleeding, a yellow colour to the skin or eyes, or pain upon urination (passing of water) may occur. Contact your doctor if any of these side effects persist or become intolerable.

RELATION TO DIET:

Speak to your dietitian about limiting purine in your diet. Unless you have been advised to restrict fluid intake, aim to drink 2-3 litres of fluids a day. Avoid alcohol, especially beer.

PRECAUTIONS:

When you are taking allopurinol, it is especially important that your doctor and pharmacist know if you are taking any of the following:

- Ampicillin or Amoxicillin - The combination of allopurinol plus ampicillin or amoxicillin may increase the risk of skin rash.
- Azathioprine or Mercaptopurine - Allopurinol may cause higher blood levels of azathioprine or mercaptopurine, leading to an increased chance of serious side effects.

WHY I AM TAKING THIS MEDICINE:

Version: October 20, 2011
This document is posted online at : http://www.bcrenalagency.ca/patients/MedInfo/Renal+Formulary_Professionals.htm