

Hydroxychloroquine, Oxiklorin® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases

Indications

Hydroxychloroquine (Oxiklorin®) is used for treatment of indications such as rheumatoid arthritis and other long-term joint inflammation and inflammatory connective tissue diseases such as SLE (systemic lupus erythematosus).

Drug product and mode of action

Hydroxychloroquine belongs to the class of traditional antirheumatic drugs. Hydroxychloroquine soothes the joint inflammation and prevents or stops the progress of the disease. In inflammatory connective tissue diseases, it alleviates the inflammatory reaction in the body and prevents or decreases reactivation of the disease.

Dosage and method of administration

Hydroxychloroquine is used as 100 or 300 mg tablets, max. 5 mg/kg/day. The dose is usually 200-300 mg a day. In some patients, the dose may be 300 mg a day, 5–6 days a week, as the total dose is usually calculated per week. The tablets are taken with meals with a lot of water.

Adverse effects

Hydroxychloroquine is usually well tolerated and is very rarely associated with dangerous side effects. The most common adverse effects are mild nausea, upper abdominal discomfort and in rare cases, rash. Eye problems are rare. Some patients experience nightmares. Sensitivity to sunlight may appear during the medication.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Hydroxychloroquine can be used during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Follow-up

Regular follow-ups with blood tests are not necessary. Check-ups by an ophthalmologist are recommended every couple of years 5–6 after onset of treatment, and annually more than 10 years after onset of treatment. Patients over 65 years should have their eyes examined before the onset of treatment to record any age-related changes.

Other considerations

The skin and eyes should be protected from strong sunlight. Hydroxychloroquine does not need to be stopped for surgery. Vaccinations can be given as normal.

Link [Reumalääkkeiden ohjeet | Reumatalo.fi | Terveyskylä.fi](#) (in Finnish)

[Wellbeing services county of Satakunta](#)