

Chlorambucil, LEUKERAN® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases

Mode of action/ Indications

Chlorambucil is a derivative of nitrogen mustard. Certain kinds of cytostatic drugs are derived from nitrogen mustard. Chlorambucil is used in severe forms of rheumatoid arthritis to slow down the progress of the disease. The effect of the drug becomes evident in 2-4 months.

Dosage and method of administration

The drug is available as 2 mg tablets. The daily dosage of chlorambucil is 0.1-0.2 mg/kg divided into two doses. The dose is prescribed individually by the doctor. The tablets are swallowed whole with plenty of fluid. They must not be divided or crushed.

Storage

Store the tablets in the refrigerator.

Adverse effects

Large doses may impair bone marrow function, leading to decreased formation of blood cells. The appearance of bruises for no apparent reason may be a result of a low amount of blood platelets. Gastrointestinal adverse effects may also occur. Chlorambucil may increase susceptibility to infections. The drug is not given during a severe infection.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

The drug must not be used during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Make sure you use reliable contraception while taking the medication! The medication must be withdrawn no later than 3 months before a planned pregnancy. This recommendation applies to men as well.

Follow-up

Safety tests are taken 2–3, 6 and 12 weeks after onset of treatment, and then once every 3–6 months. The results are checked at the health centre. The safety tests include the following: Basic blood count, B-NEUT and ALT. CREA, U-ChemScr, CRP and ESR are measured in connection with treatment assessment before doctor's appointment every 6–12 months.

Other considerations

It is recommended that the drug is stopped a week before surgery. The use of the drug may be restarted after 2 weeks once the wound has healed. Vaccines that contain live attenuated organisms are not recommended during treatment with chlorambucil.

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

[Wellbeing services county of Satakunta](#)