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Hydroxychloroquine: Patient drug information Lexicomp®

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(For additional information [see "Hydroxychloroquine: Drug information"](#) and [see "Hydroxychloroquine: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US Plaquenil

Brand Names: Canada Apo-Hydroxyquine; Gen-Hydroxychloroquine; Mylan-Hydroxychloroquine; Plaquenil; PRO-Hydroxyquine

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent malaria.
- It is used to treat lupus.
- It is used to treat rheumatoid arthritis.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- If you have an allergy to hydroxychloroquine or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have had any eye changes or changes in eyesight due to this drug or drugs like this one.
- If the patient is a child. This drug is not for long-term use in children. The chance of side effects may be higher in children.

Lupus or rheumatoid arthritis:

- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Use care when driving or doing other tasks that call for clear eyesight.
- Have an eye exam as you have been told by your doctor.
- Have your blood work checked if you are on this drug for a long time. Talk with your doctor.
- Be careful if you have G6PD deficiency. Anemia may happen.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.

- Keep away from children. Accidental exposure may cause death. If a child takes this drug by accident, get medical help right away.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

Malaria:

- If you are a pregnant woman and traveling to a malaria infested place, talk to your doctor about the risks first.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Seizures.
- Mood changes.
- If you are planning to harm yourself or the want to harm yourself gets worse.
- Bad dreams.
- Change in hearing.
- Ringing in ears.
- Change in balance.
- Fever or chills.
- Sore throat.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Muscle weakness.
- Trouble controlling body movements, twitching, change in balance, trouble swallowing or speaking.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- Call your doctor right away if you have any changes in eyesight. Rarely, this may not go away.
- A very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause very bad health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness.
- Headache.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Not hungry.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Upset stomach.
- Stomach cramps.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take this drug with food or milk.
- If antacids are used, they may need to be taken at some other time than this drug. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature.
- Protect from light.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist about how to throw out unused drugs.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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