

Patient Safety ALERT :

Oral methotrexate

METHOTREXATE is a disease-modifying drug which may be prescribed to treat the following conditions, which include an autoimmune component:

- Dermatological conditions, including severe psoriasis
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Rheumatoid arthritis / inflammatory joint disease

Methotrexate is an effective treatment, but can be highly toxic if not prescribed, dispensed, administered or monitored correctly.

Inappropriate prescribing, supply or administration of oral methotrexate is a 'NEVER EVENT'

To reduce the risk of error and patient harm, for non-cancer treatment, ensure that:

- ✓ **Methotrexate** is given as a **ONCE WEEKLY DOSE**.
- ✓ **Methotrexate** is only be supplied and administered in multiples of **2.5mg tablets** on a patient-specific basis.
- ✓ **Patient-held methotrexate information / booklet** is checked and kept up to date.
- ✓ **Folic acid (folate) is generally co-prescribed** to limit the side effects of methotrexate treatment.
- ✓ Always **CHECK and CLARIFY** if you are unsure about any of the above.

FOR ACTION:

Ensure that ALL STAFF are aware of this when prescribing, dispensing, administering, monitoring or reviewing patients' medication.