

Natulan®

procarbazine hydrochloride

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet?

This leaflet answers some common questions about NATULAN capsules.

It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking NATULAN capsules against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What NATULAN is used for

The name of your medicine is NATULAN. It contains the active ingredient called procarbazine hydrochloride.

NATULAN belongs to a group of medicines called anticancer drugs. Anticancer drugs are used to treat cancer and work by stopping the growth of certain types of cells in the body, including diseased cells.

NATULAN is prescribed for several conditions including Hodgkin's disease and some types of blood disorders.

There are many different types of medicines used to treat cancer. NATULAN belongs to a group of medicines known as methylhydrazine compounds.

Your doctor may have prescribed NATULAN for another purpose. **Ask your doctor if you have any questions why NATULAN has been prescribed for you.**

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take NATULAN

Do not take NATULAN if:

- You have had an allergic reaction to NATULAN or any ingredients listed in the Ingredients section of this leaflet. An allergic reaction may result in a skin rash.
- You have an abnormal number of white blood cells or platelets.
- You have severe kidney or liver disease.

Do not take NATULAN after the expiry date {EXP} printed on the pack.

It may have no effect or, worse, an entirely unexpected effect if you take it after the expiry date.

Do not take NATULAN if the package is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If you are not sure if you should be taking NATULAN, talk to your doctor.

You must tell your doctor if:

1. **you are allergic to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.**
2. **you have any other health problems including:**
 - liver disease
 - kidney disease
 - blood disorders
3. **you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant.**

4. **You are breastfeeding or wish to breastfeed.**

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of using NATULAN when pregnant and while breastfeeding.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines including any that you have bought from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Other medicines may interfere with NATULAN. These medicines include:

- those you are currently taking to treat your illness
- those used to treat anxiety, depression, sleeplessness or other psychological disorder
- sympathomimetics e.g. some cough and cold medicines.

Patients are advised to avoid cheeses and other foods high in sympathomimeticamines during treatment.

You may find that you have developed an intolerance to alcohol, therefore it is best to avoid alcohol during treatment with NATULAN.

Your doctor or pharmacist has a complete list of medicines to avoid while taking NATULAN.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start taking NATULAN.

Use NATULAN exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

How to take NATULAN

How much to take

Your doctor will tell you how many NATULAN capsules to take each day.

NATULAN is given initially in small doses which are increased gradually. Dosage is 50 mg (1 capsule) on the first day, increasing by 50 mg daily up to 250-300 mg (5-6 capsules) daily after 5-6 days. Dosage is continued at this level until your illness is under control. After this, you take NATULAN at a lower dose to maintain the improvement.

If you suffer from a liver or kidney condition or have an illness of your blood your doctor may decide whether you should take NATULAN at a lower dose or not at all. Please follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

Your doctor may tell you to stop taking NATULAN for a while if you develop certain blood problems.

How to take it

Capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water.

Do not take any damaged capsules.

How long to take NATULAN

Your doctor knows best when you should stop taking NATULAN. It is usually prescribed at the maintenance dose until you have taken a total dose of 6 g. Your treatment may last for between 6 weeks to 4 months.

Continue taking NATULAN until your doctor tells you to stop.

If you forget to take NATULAN

If you forget to take a dose, inform your doctor immediately. If you are unable to

contact your doctor and it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember, then go back to taking it as soon as you would normally.

Do not double a dose to make up for one you have missed.

In case of an overdose

Immediately telephone your doctor or Poisons Information Centre (Telephone 13 11 26) for advice or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much NATULAN even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning. You may need urgent medical attention.

Keep telephone numbers for these places handy.

If you are not sure what to do, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand anything in this list.

While you are taking NATULAN

Things you must do

Tell all doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking NATULAN.

Do not take any other medicines whether they require a prescription or not without first telling your doctor.

Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while taking NATULAN.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken your medicine exactly as prescribed. Otherwise, your doctor may think that it was not effective and change your treatment unnecessarily.

Tell your doctor if you feel the capsules are not helping your condition.

Be sure to keep all of your appointments with your doctor so that your progress can be checked.

Things you must not do

Do not stop taking NATULAN or change the dose without first checking with your doctor.

Do not let yourself run out of medicine over the weekend or on holidays.

Do not give NATULAN to anyone else even if their symptoms seem similar to yours.

Do not use NATULAN to treat other complaints unless your doctor says to.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how NATULAN affects you.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking NATULAN.

NATULAN helps most people with cancer but it may have unwanted side effects in a few people.

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not.

You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

If side effects do occur, they may be:

- Anorexic (loss of appetite), nausea, sometimes with vomiting. These effects usually go away after the first few weeks of treatment. These effects may also occur if you take too much NATULAN.
- Blood problems - your doctor will do regular blood tests to check this
- Bone marrow depression

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- alopecia (loss of hair), this is reversible in most cases
- headache
- tingling of fingers or toes
- diseases of the nerves
- defective muscular coordination e.g. unsteady walking
- disturbances of liver function causing yellowing of the skin/eyes
- skin rashes and/or itching
- rarely, low sperm counts

This is not a complete list of all possible side effects. Others may occur in some people and there may be some side effects not yet known.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if it is not on this list.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand anything in this list.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

After taking NATULAN

Storage

Keep NATULAN where young children cannot reach it.

Keep NATULAN in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 30°C. Do not store it, or any other medicine, in a bathroom or near a sink.

Do not leave it in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep your capsules in the bottle until it is time to take them.

If you take the capsules out of the bottle they may not keep well.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking NATULAN, or the capsule has passed its expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any capsules that are left over.

Product description

What NATULAN looks like

NATULAN capsules are pale yellow in colour.

Ingredients

Active ingredient - procarbazine (as the hydrochloride)

- each capsule contains 50 mg of procarbazine (as the hydrochloride).

Inactive ingredients

- mannitol, corn starch, talc, gelatin, magnesium stearate and the colourants yellow iron oxide (172) and titanium dioxide (171)

NATULAN capsules are gluten free.

NATULAN comes in packs of 50 capsules in a bottle or in a carton of foil blisters.

Sponsor

NATULAN is distributed by:

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