

## WHAT HAPPENS IF ONE FORGETS TO TAKE A DOSE OF COLCHICINE?

If you miss your normal dose, DO NOT double the next dose. The maximum daily allowance is 2.5mg to 3mg a day. **The risk of overdosing is very high, so it is important to skip the missed dose and continue the medication as normally prescribed.**

It is also recommended to take Colchicine at around **the same time everyday**, give or take a couple of hours, because if doses are taken too close to one another, it can provoke the unpleasant side effect of diarrhea.

## CAN ONE MODIFY THE PRESCRIBED DOSAGE OF COLCHICINE?

The dosage must be **adapted to the individual by medical prescription**. Of course, it could be slightly modified according to the patient's schedule (for example, for trips, exams, etc.) or also at the beginning of treatment in order to determine the correct dosage for the patient. The physician may also reduce the dosage of the medicine if the patient seems to be improving after a few months, at which time he will prescribe **the lowest possible effective dosage**.

## SHOULD A HEALTHY CARRIER OF THE DISEASE?

There is no indication for a healthy carrier to take Colchicine. One should only take Colchicine if the person presents with symptoms of the disease.

## IS THERE AN OBVIOUS CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR WHEN TREATED WITH COLCHICINE?

No major changes in behavior have been noticed in patients taking Colchicine. Some effects are more often due to the fact that the patient is dealing with **a new, unfamiliar disease** rather than being side effects of the medication. It is never easy for anyone to first hear that he has been diagnosed with a genetic disease.

## DOES COLCHICINE PROVOKE GASTRIC PROBLEMS OVER LONG TERM USE?

No. No gastric problems have been reported by any patient with FMF who is on a regimen of Colchicine. However, gastric problems can possibly be provoked if a patient is simultaneously taking other types of anti-inflammatory medications or if the person has other medical issues.

## IS COLCHICINE TOXIC?

Yes. Like any other medicine, Colchicine can become toxic if dosages above 5 or 6mg per day are ingested. It is critical that **a patient follow the exact dosage prescribed by their physician**.

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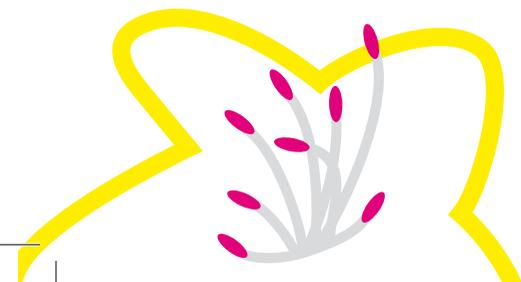
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**TAKING COLCHICINE  
ON A LONG TERM BASIS**



## WHAT IS "FAMILIAL MEDITERRANEAN FEVER"?

Familial Mediterranean Fever (FMF) is **an inflammatory disease**. It is a rare, genetic disorder that manifests itself by fever, abdominal, thoracic pain and/or pain in the legs (joint or muscle) which symptoms can last anywhere from one day to several weeks.

Apart from the difficulties one suffers during flare-ups, the principal danger of this disease is the possible progression towards the loss of **renal function by amyloidosis**, a potentially life-threatening condition which often requires dialysis and which, under the most severe circumstances, can even lead to death.

When the diagnostic is finally made, often after years of erroneous medical diagnoses, the patient starts **a long-term regimen of the medication "Colchicine"** and must be closely monitored by a specialist or internist.

## WHAT DOES COLCHICINE DO?

Colchicine works to **counteract extreme inflammation** which, consequently, **reduces** the frequency and the intensity of the flare-ups. It must be taken **on a daily**, continuous basis, in order to avoid any risks of renal failure.

## CAN COLCHICINE BE NON-EFFECTIVE FOR CERTAIN PATIENTS?

First, perhaps it is necessary to define what it means for a medication to be "non-effective" or rather, what it means when a patient is not responsive to Colchicine.

In the majority of cases, non-responsiveness to Colchicine is usually due to **incorrect dosing and administration** of the medication. It is estimated that less than 2% of patients are resistant to the medication. As for the other patients who are responsive to the medication, the patient should **not discontinue the Colchicine abruptly for fear of developing renal failure**.

It is common, during childhood or the initial period of taking Colchicine, to spend time adjusting the dosage to find the correct one, so not to provoke any resistance to this medicine.

## WHAT ARE THE ADVERSE SIDE EFFECTS OF THIS MEDICATION?

Frequently, it is diarrhea. In that case, it is advisable to **split the dosage** over 2 to 3 weeks and then, under the doctor's surveillance, switch to the medicine COLCHIMAX.

## WHAT ARE THE CONTRAINDICATIONS?

Colchicine is contraindicated in patients taking certain **types of macrolide antibiotics**, which can increase the toxicity of Colchicine in the blood. It is also contraindicated in patients taking immunosuppressants or anti-coagulants and "statins" (for the treatment of high cholesterol). It is absolutely **imperative** to inform the physician if you are being treated with Colchicine.

## ARE THERE PLANS TO PRODUCE A TABLET FOR PEDIATRIC USAGE?

The Colchicine tablet is difficult to break in half and is extremely bitter in taste. **The Galenique Vernin Laboratory realized that there was a lack of children's dosages of the medication and therefore are working on it.** In the meantime, for children, it is recommended to split the pill and mix it with apple sauce or some other such type of soft and palatable food.

## HOW TO HANDLE NON-COMPLIANCE OF TREATMENT BY TEENAGERS AND YOUNG PATIENTS?

Very often, teenagers refuse to follow treatment because they want to feel normal or "like everyone else." This is a typical reaction seen in patients who suffer from all types of chronic illnesses, and such refusal of treatment often translates into non-acceptance of their disease, generally speaking. So what happens then? Flare-ups become more **frequent** thus commencing a vicious cycle. **For this reason, it is important to have the consulting physician involved in the process of treating younger, recalcitrant patients.**



## COLCHICINE AND PREGNANCY AND FAMILY PLANNING: IS IT SAFE TO USE THIS MEDICATION?

Yes it is. **Colchicine, in the prescribed dosages, does not affect fertility for either men or women.** It is imperative that neither gender discontinue the use of this drug during pre-pregnancy and pregnancy.

Moreover, studies have confirmed that there is **no risk for congenital malformations** of the fetus during the treatment of Colchicine for either parent. Thus, it would not be necessary to do an amniocentesis during pregnancy (knowing that amniocentesis may sometimes result in miscarriages).

Studies have also shown that Colchicine **reduces flare-ups** among many pregnant women. Nevertheless, if Colchicine is not taken correctly, the disease itself can **increase inflammation** which carries **risks of provoking a miscarriage**.

## CAN A MOTHER BREAST FEED WHILE TAKING COLCHICINE?

**Yes**, however one must still take some precautions with respect to when in the day the medication is taken. Since the medication's effect peaks about 2 hours after ingestion, **it is recommended not to breast feed around that time.** That said, the negligible amount of medicine which may be absorbed in the breast milk is not harmful at all. However, it is not recommended to take the medication COLCHIMAX while breast feeding because it contains opiate and atropinic derivatives.

