

Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil (PTU)

This leaflet offers more information about taking Carbimazole or PTU to treat your thyroid problem. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff members in charge of your care.

What are Carbimazole and PTU?

These medications are used to control the overactivity of the thyroid gland. In the UK, Carbimazole is the most commonly used drug. A course of antithyroid drugs usually will last 18 months to three years.

Are there any side effects?

These tablets are generally safe, but rarely may cause side effects. Either drug can cause a skin rash. This can be irritating but does not cause serious problems.

More rarely, Carbimazole can damage the production of white blood cells and this may impair the ability of the body to fight infections. The earliest sign that the drug may be affecting the white blood cells is a serious infection such as a severe sore throat or mouth ulcer.

This information sheet tells you what to do should you experience any of these symptoms.

If you develop a skin rash:

- Stop your Carbimazole or PTU.
- Contact your consultant (Ask for the Paediatric Endocrine Consultant on call, via St George's switchboard).

If you develop a severe sore throat, fever or mouth ulcers:

- Stop your Carbimazole or PTU.
- You have to attend the hospital within 24 hours. Bring a blood request form with you and have the blood count checked in the outpatient blood test room. Phlebotomy is open Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 12.45pm and 2.00 to 4.15pm.
- Contact the endocrine clinical nurse specialist on 0787 659 7062 or 0778 685 6764 between 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday or, on weekends and bank holidays contact the on-call SHO or Registrar for paediatrics via switch board before arrival
- After the test contact the endocrine secretary via Childrens.SecretariesC@stgeorges.nhs.uk or 020 8725 2290 within 24 hours, for further instructions.

- If the test shows your white blood cells to be normal you should continue taking Carbimazole or PTU.

Note: Of course, sore throats, mouth ulcers and skin rashes are very common and it is most likely that if you get one of these it is not due to the effects of Carbimazole or PTU. However, the only safe action is to stop the Carbimazole or PTU until you have had the result of the blood test.

Useful sources of information

British Thyroid Foundation

<https://www.btf-thyroid.org/about-antithyroid-drugs>

Contact us

Please contact the paediatric endocrine clinical nurse specialist on either 0787 659 7062 or 0778 685 6764 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm) if you have any questions about this. You can also telephone your consultant via hospital switchboard if you need advice out of hours.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer). **Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

