

## What do I need to know about Hydroxychloroquine?

(say “hye-drok-see-KLOR-uh-kwin”)

Other names for this medicine include: Plaquenil®

Medicine is one of the tools your doctor has to treat your lupus. Taking medicine as your doctor suggests will improve your lupus. And it may prevent more serious health problems in the future. If you don't take your medicines correctly, you may be putting your health, and perhaps your life, at risk.

### Why am I taking this medicine?

To control the signs and symptoms of your lupus so you feel better. This medicine works to keep your lupus under control to help prevent future problems. And this medicine will reduce the number of flares you have.

### How do I take this medicine?

- Your doctor wants you to take 200 mg tablets.
- Take \_\_\_\_\_ tablets by mouth \_\_\_\_\_ times each day.
- Take this medicine with food. (Take the medicine just before, right after, or during a meal. Or you can take the medicine with a snack, such as a few crackers.)

### How fast does it work?

You should begin to feel better in 1 to 2 months. However, it may take up to 6 to 12 months before you'll feel your best.

### I'm feeling better. Can I stop taking my medicine?

No, even if you're feeling better, keep taking your medicine. Do not stop unless your doctor says it's O.K. to stop.

### Are there any side effects?

Side effects are unplanned symptoms (signs) or feelings you have when taking a medicine. Some side effects happen just when you start taking a medicine. Some happen only once in a while.

**IMPORTANT**

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- Trouble reading or seeing (words, letters, or parts of objects missing)
- Blurry distance vision
- Seeing light flashes or streaks
- Ringing in ears
- Muscle weakness
- Bleeding or bruising of the skin
- Mood or mental changes
- Irregular heartbeat
- Trouble controlling body movements
- Blistered or peeling skin

Most side effects are not serious and go away on their own. Others can be more bothersome and even serious. Keep track of side effects. **Tell your doctor right away about any unexpected signs or changes in the way you feel.**

- The most common side effects are nausea, vomiting, cramps, and diarrhea (watery poop). Taking this medicine with food can sometimes decrease these reactions.
- Uncommon side effects include tiredness, headache, and not feeling hungry. They usually go away over time.
- You may develop anemia (not enough red blood cells to carry oxygen around the body).
- This medicine can cause serious problems with your eyesight. You will need to have regular eye exams to check for problems.

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

- Tell your doctor about all medicines you use. This includes prescriptions, medicines you buy off the shelf at the store, vitamins, and herbal products. Do not start a new medicine without telling your doctor.
- You may get sunburned more easily. Avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun.
- Talk with your doctors if you are pregnant or if you're thinking of getting pregnant.
- Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.



Keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children. Never share your medicines with others. Use this medicine only for the reason your doctor said to.

**What follow-up do I need?**

You will need regular eye exams.

**What's the doctor's phone number? (585) 486-0901**