

What do I need to know about Azathioprine?

(say “ay za THYE oh preen”)

Other names for this medicine include: Imuran®, Azasan®

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?

Azathioprine is used to help stop your immune system from attacking your joints and other body parts. It helps control your lupus so you feel better.

How do I take this medicine?

- Your doctor wants you to take azathioprine _____mg tablets.
- Take _____tablets by mouth _____ time(s) per day.

How fast does it work?

This medicine may take 6-12 weeks before you feel better. Your doctor may need to adjust the amount of medicine you take.

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.

URGENT

Call your doctor immediately, day or night, if you have:

- **Fever**
- **Rash**

IMPORTANT

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- Vomiting
- Night sweats
- Itching
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Tiredness
- Pain in your upper stomach
- Easy bruising or bleeding
- Feeling lightheaded or short of breath
- Rapid heart rate
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes

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, and diarrhea (watery poop). Taking this medicine with food can sometimes decrease these reactions.
- An allergic reaction with flu-like symptoms and a rash can occur. This is uncommon.
- This medicine can decrease the infection-fighting cells in your blood. Avoid being near people who are sick or have infections. Your doctor will check your blood tests regularly.

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.
- It is important to know that many medicines do not mix well with alcohol.
- Talk to your doctor before getting any shots. Some shots are not good for you while you are taking this medicine.
- Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding.



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 have regular blood work. It is important to have the blood work done. This is how your doctor checks for side effects from the medicine.

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