

Resource

Leflunomide

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How to say it?

Le-flu-noe-mide

Other names:

Arava

How is it taken?

Tablet

How often?

Once daily

How long for?

Long term

How soon does it start working?

After several weeks

Usage

Leflunomide is sometimes used as a valuable alternative to methotrexate, especially when there is methotrexate-associated nausea. Although it does not cause nausea, in a small number of patients it may cause some diarrhoea. This stops on cessation of the drug. Very rarely, it may cause numbness or tingling of the hands. It works in a similar way to methotrexate and blood monitoring is similar, too. Your team will advise you fully on this.

Precautions

Leflunomide should be avoided by anyone wanting to start a family and anyone whose blood cell counts are particularly low.

Blood tests

As for methotrexate, above.

Pregnancy

Anyone taking leflunomide who is sexually active should take effective contraception during treatment and for at least two years afterwards, in the case of women, or at least three months, in the case of men.

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