

## Package Leaflet: Information for the user

### Folinic Acid (as Calcium Folate) 10 mg/ml Solution for Injection calcium folinate hydrate

**Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start using this medicine because it contains important information for you.**

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

#### **What is in this leaflet:**

1. What Folinic acid Solution for Injection is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you use Folinic acid Solution for Injection
3. How to use Folinic acid Solution for Injection
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Folinic acid Solution for Injection
6. Contents of the pack and other information

#### **1. What Folinic Acid Solution for Injection is and what it is used for**

Folinic acid is one of the B group of vitamins.

Folinic acid Solution for Injection is used to reduce the side effects of other medicines (a group of medicines called folic acid antagonists). Examples of folic acid antagonists are:

- methotrexate (a medicine often used to treat cancer)
- trimetrexate (an antibiotic and anti-cancer medicine)
- trimethoprim (an antibiotic)
- pyrimethamine (a medicine often used to treat malaria)

It may also be used to treat an overdose of these medicines.

Folinic acid Solution for Injection may also be used to increase the effectiveness of the anti-cancer medicine fluorouracil.

You must talk to a doctor if you do not feel better or if you feel worse.

#### **2. What you need to know before you use Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

**Folinic Acid Solution for Injection must not be injected intrathecally (into the spine).**

#### **Do not use Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

- if you are allergic to folinic acid or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6)
- if you have a type of anaemia caused by too little vitamin B<sub>12</sub>

Tell your doctor if either of the above applies to you before this medicine is used.

#### **Warnings and Precautions**

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse before taking Folinic Acid Solution for Injection.

### **Use of Folinic Acid Solution for Injection with fluorouracil**

You should not start to use this medicine together with fluorouracil if you have noticed that your medicine is causing problems to your stomach and gut.

### **Take special care with Folinic Acid Solution for Injection if:**

- your kidneys do not work properly – you may need to take a higher dose or need to take this medicine for longer
- if you have epilepsy

### **Take special care with Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

If you are to receive Folinic acid and fluorouracil treatment at the same time take special care if:

- you have had radiotherapy
- you have stomach or bowel trouble
- you have an inflammation on the inside of your mouth
- you are elderly
- you feel very weak

Tell your doctor if the above applies to you before this medicine is used.

Special care is also needed if you are elderly and you are to receive folinic acid and fluorouracil treatment at the same time.

### **Other medicines and Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

Tell your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines.

Special care is needed if you are taking/using other medicines as some could interact with Folinic Acid Solution for Injection, for example:

- calcium folinate may sometimes be given at the same time as a medicine known as a folic acid antagonist, examples are cotrimoxazole, methotrexate and pyrimethamine). When this happens the effect of the folic acid antagonist may be reduced or minimised altogether.
- fluorouracil (anti-cancer medicine) – the effectiveness and side effects of this medicine will be increased by folinic acid
- medicines used to treat epilepsy (phenobarbitone, phenytoin, primidone or succinimides) – the effectiveness of these medicines may be reduced by folinic acid. Your doctor may check blood levels of these medicines and change your dose to prevent increased convulsions (fits)
- DNA synthesis inhibitors (anti-cancer medicines such as hydroxycarbamide, cytarabine, mecapurine and thioguanine)
- The effectiveness of folinic acid can be reduced by chloramphenicol (an antibiotic)

Your doctor will monitor how well your kidneys are working and will take regular blood tests to check this.

### **Pregnancy, breast-feeding and fertility**

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine.

It is unlikely that your doctor will ask you to take/use a folic acid antagonist or fluorouracil whilst you are pregnant or breast-feeding. However, if you have taken/used a folic acid antagonist whilst pregnant or breast-feeding, this medicine (Folinic acid) may be used to reduce its side effects.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking any medicine.

### **Driving and Using Machines**

There is no evidence that calcium folinate has any effect on the ability to drive or use machines.

### **Folinic Acid Solution for Injection contains sodium**

Folinic Acid 50 mg/5 ml solution for injection contains 16.74 mg of sodium (main component of cooking/table salt) in each 5 ml vial. This is equivalent to 0.8% of the recommended maximum daily dietary intake of sodium for an adult.

Folinic acid 100 mg/10 ml solution for injection contains 33.5 mg of sodium (main component of cooking/table salt) in each 10 ml vial. This is equivalent to 1.7% of the recommended maximum daily dietary intake of sodium for an adult.

Folinic acid 300 mg/30 ml solution for injection contains 100.5 mg sodium (main component of cooking/table salt) in each 30 ml vial. This is equivalent to 5% of the recommended maximum daily dietary intake of sodium for an adult.

### **3. How to use Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

This medicine may be given by injection (using a syringe) into muscle. Alternatively it may be given by injection or infusion (drip) into a vein. If it is given by infusion Folinic Acid Solution for Injection will be diluted first.

### **Recommended dose**

Your doctor will work out the correct dose of Folinic Acid Solution for Injection for you and how often it must be given. It will depend upon the medical condition which is being treated.

### **If you use more Folinic Acid Solution for Injection than you should**

This medicine will be given to you in a hospital, under the supervision of a doctor. It is unlikely that you will be given too much or too little, however, tell your doctor or nurse if you have any concerns.

### **If you forget to use Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

### **4. Possible side effects**

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

#### **Very rare: may affect up to 1 in 10,000 people**

- severe allergic reaction - you may experience a sudden itchy rash (hives), swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, face, lips, mouth or throat (which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing), and you may feel you are going to faint. This is a serious side effect. You may need urgent medical attention.

#### **Uncommon: may affect up to 1 in 100 people**

- fever

#### **Rare: may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people**

- an increase in convulsions (fits) in patients with epilepsy
- depression
- agitation
- problems with the digestive system
- difficulty sleeping (insomnia)

**Not known: frequency cannot be estimated from the available data**

- stomach pain

*Combination therapy with 5-fluorouracil only:*

If you receive calcium folinate in combination with an anticancer medicine containing fluoropyrimidines, it is more likely that you experience the following side effects of this other medicine:

**Very common: may affect more than 1 in 10 people**

- nausea
- vomiting
- severe diarrhoea
- drying out which may be due to diarrhea
- inflammation of the lining of the intestine and mouth (life-threatening conditions have occurred)
- reduction in the number of blood cells (including life-threatening conditions)

**Common: may affect up to 1 in 10 people**

- redness and swelling of the palms of the hands or the soles of the feet which may cause the skin to peel (hand-foot syndrome)

**Not known: frequency cannot be estimated from the available data**

- elevated ammonia level in the blood

Tell your doctor if you experience diarrhoea or an inflammation of the lining of the mouth, as your doctor might wish to decrease the dose of fluorouracil until symptoms have fully disappeared.

Because diarrhoea may be a sign of toxicity to the stomach and gut, if you show these symptoms, you will be carefully monitored until the symptoms have disappeared completely. These symptoms may be the start of a rapid deterioration leading to death.

Your doctor may do tests to check for low levels of calcium in your blood.

**Reporting of side effects**

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via:

**Ireland**

HPRA Pharmacovigilance. Website: [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie)

**Malta**

ADR Reporting

Website: [www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal](http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal)

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

## **5. How to store Folinic Acid Solution for Injection**

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

### **Expiry**

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the vial and carton after 'EXP'. Where only a month and year is stated, the expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

### **Storage**

Store in a refrigerator (+2°C to +8°C). Keep vial in the outer carton in order to protect from light.

### **Visible signs of deterioration**

Only clear, pale yellow solutions should be used. If cloudy in appearance or particles can be seen, the solution should be discarded.

## **6. Contents of the pack and other information**

### **What Folinic Acid Solution for Injection contains**

The active substance is folinic acid. Each vial of 5 ml, 10 ml or 30 ml solution contains 10 mg/ml of folinic acid provided as calcium folinate hydrate. Each 1 mg of folinic acid is equivalent to 1.08 mg of calcium folinate hydrate.

The other ingredients are sodium chloride, water for injections, sodium hydroxide and hydrochloric acid. See section 2 **Folinic Acid Solution for Infusion contains sodium** for further information about the sodium content.

### **What Folinic Acid Solution for Injection looks like and contents of the pack**

Folinic Acid Solution for Injection is a clear, pale yellow solution for injection which comes in glass containers called vials.

It is supplied in packs containing:

- 1 x 50 mg/5 ml vial
- 1 x 100 mg/10 ml vial
- 1 x 300 mg/30 ml vial

### **Ireland**

#### **Marketing authorisation holder**

Pfizer Healthcare Ireland  
9 Riverwalk  
National Digital Park  
Citywest Business Campus  
Dublin 24

### **Malta**

#### **Marketing authorisation holder**

Pfizer Hellas S.A.  
243 Messoghion Ave.

Neo Psychiko 15451,  
Greece

**Manufacturer**

Pfizer Service Company BVBA, Hoge Wei 10, 1930 Zaventem, Belgium

**This leaflet was last revised in MM/YYYY**

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**Folinic Acid (as Calcium Folate)  
10 mg/ml Solution for Injection**

**The following information is intended for medical or healthcare professionals only**

Further to the information included in section 3, practical information on the preparation/handling of the medicinal product is provided here.

**Incompatibilities**

Incompatibilities have been reported between injectable forms of Folinic acid and injectable forms of droperidol, fluorouracil, foscarnet and methotrexate.

**Droperidol**

1. Droperidol 1.25 mg/0.5 ml with Folinic acid 5 mg/0.5 ml, immediate precipitation in direct admixture in syringe for 5 minutes at 25°C followed by 8 minutes of centrifugation.
2. Droperidol 2.5 mg/0.5 ml with Folinic acid 10 mg/0.5 ml, immediate precipitation when the drugs were injected sequentially into a Y-site without flushing the Y-side arm between injections.

**Fluorouracil**

Folinic acid must not be mixed in the same infusion as 5-fluorouracil because a precipitate may form. Fluorouracil 50 mg/ml with Folinic acid 20 mg/ml, with or without dextrose 5% in water, has been shown to be incompatible when mixed in different amounts and stored at 4°C, 23°C, or 32°C in polyvinyl chloride containers.

**Foscarnet**

Foscarnet 24 mg/ml with Folinic acid 20 mg/ml; formation of a cloudy yellow solution reported.

**Instructions for use and handling, and disposal**

Folinic Acid Solution for Injection is intended only for single use. Any unused portion of the solution should be disposed of in accordance with the local requirements.

For intravenous infusion, Folinic Acid Solution for Injection may be diluted with 0.9% sodium chloride or 5% glucose solution before use.

From a microbial point of view, the product should be used immediately. If not used immediately, in-use storage times and conditions prior to use are the responsibility of the user.

Prior to administration, folinic acid should be inspected visually. The solution for injection or infusion should be a clear and yellowish solution. If cloudy in appearance or particles are observed, the solution should be discarded.