

Rasburicase: information for families

This information sheet explains what rasburicase is, how it is given and some of the possible side effects. Each person reacts differently to medicines, so your child will not necessarily suffer from every side effect mentioned. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Please read this in conjunction with any patient information leaflet provided by the manufacturer. However, please note that this information sheet explains about the use of rasburicase in children and young people so may differ from the manufacturer's information.

What is rasburicase?

Rasburicase is a medicine that is sometimes given at the start of chemotherapy for leukaemia or lymphomas.

When chemotherapy starts to kill the leukaemia or lymphoma cells, uric acid is released from inside these cells. It can crystallise and cause damage to the kidneys.

Rasburicase works by allowing uric acid to be more easily removed from the body by the kidneys.

Rasburicase should not be taken by anyone with a condition called glucose 6 dehydrogenase deficiency (G6PD). Tell your doctor if your child or anyone in your family has G6PD.

How is it given?

It is given as an infusion over 30 minutes into a vein (intravenously or IV) through a cannula, central venous catheter or implantable port.

What are the side effects?

Allergic reaction

Some children receiving rasburicase may have an allergic reaction to the drug. This reaction may be mild to severe.

Signs of a **mild** allergic reaction include skin rashes and itching, high temperature, shivering, redness of the face, a feeling of dizziness or a headache. If you see any of these signs, please report them to a doctor or nurse.

Signs of a **severe** allergic reaction include any of the above, as well as shortness of breath or chest pain. If you are in hospital and your child shows signs of a severe allergic reaction, call a doctor or nurse immediately.

Blood disorders

Rarely, rasburicase can cause problems with the way that the red blood cells work. Your child's blood will be checked regularly to monitor this side effect.



Nausea and vomiting

Anti-sickness drugs can be given to reduce or prevent these symptoms. Please tell your doctor or nurse if your child's sickness is very bad or continues for more than a few days.

Interactions with other medicines

Some medicines can react with rasburicase, altering how well it works. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving your child any other medicine, including medicines on prescription from your family doctor (GP), medicines bought from a pharmacy (chemist) or any herbal or complementary medicines. Cough and cold medicines (other than paracetamol) should be particularly avoided.

Useful numbers

- GOSH switchboard 020 7405 9200
- Pharmacy medicines information 020 7829 8608 (Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm)

Disclaimer

Please read this information sheet from GOSH alongside the patient information leaflet (PIL) provided by the manufacturer. If you do not have a copy of the manufacturer's patient information leaflet please talk to your pharmacist. A few products do not have a marketing authorisation (licence) as a medicine and therefore there is no PIL.

For children in particular, there may be conflicts of information between the manufacturer's patient information leaflet (PIL) and guidance provided by GOSH and other healthcare providers. For example, some manufacturers may recommend, in the patient information leaflet, that a medicine is not given to children aged under 12 years. In most cases, this is because the manufacturer will recruit adults to clinical trials in the first instance and therefore the initial marketing authorisation (licence) only covers adults and older children.

For new medicines, the manufacturer then has to recruit children and newborns into trials (unless the medicine is not going to be used in children and newborns) and subsequently amend the PIL with the approved information. Older medicines may have been used effectively for many years in children without problems but the manufacturer has not been required to collect data and amend the licence. This does not mean that it is unsafe for children and young people to be prescribed such a medicine 'off-licence/off-label'. However, if you are concerned about any conflicts of information, please discuss with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

