Health and Social Care Board

Interface Pharmacist Network Specialist Medicines

Hydroxychloroquine

Dermatology / Rheumatology shared care guideline.

Specialist details	Patient identifier
Name: _____	
Location: _____	
Tel: _____	**Date:** _____

Introduction

Licensed indications: rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, discoid and systemic lupus erythematosus, and dermatological conditions caused or aggravated by sunlight.
Unlicensed indications: connective tissue disease, sarcoidosis, other cutaneous lupus erythematosus

Adult dosage and administration

A typical dose may be 200 - 400mg daily (400mg should be given in divided doses). Total daily dose should not exceed 6.5mg/kg/day based on ideal body weight. Dosage may be reduced to 200mg daily depending on clinical response.
In patients with porphyria cutanea tarda, a twice weekly dose may be used.
Dosage may need to be reduced in renal and/or hepatic impairment.
Available as: hydroxychloroquine 200mg tablets.

Hospital specialist responsibilities

- Assess if the patient is suitable for treatment with hydroxychloroquine.
- Agree shared care with the patient's GP.
- Provide the patient/carer with relevant (preferably written) information on use, side effects and need for monitoring of medication.
- Provide shared care monitoring record booklet if required.
- Undertake baseline tests as indicated in monitoring table below.
- Review results of safety monitoring and request additional tests as required. Check FBC at each review appointment.
- Monitor disease response to treatment and need to continue therapy.
- Continue to review the patient at agreed specified intervals, sending a written summary to the GP whenever the patient is reviewed.
- Provide any other advice or information for the GP if required.

*** Ophthalmic screening**

- Enquire about any visual impairment which is not corrected with spectacles.
- Patients should have baseline formal ophthalmic examination (ideally including objective retinal assessment for example using optical coherence tomography (OCT)) within 1 year of commencing hydroxychloroquine.
- Subsequent examinations should be at the discretion of the ophthalmologist.
- Annual eye assessment (ideally including OCT) if continued for >5 years.

Monitoring table		Hospital specialist	GP	Hospital specialist
Test	**Indication**	Pre-treatment baseline	During treatment	Annual review
FBC	Baseline assessment, dose adjustment	✓	Not routinely required	As part of annual review or as clinically indicated
LFTs				
U&Es, eGFR				
ESR/CRP (Rheumatology only)	Disease activity scoring			
Height & weight	Baseline assessment			
Blood pressure	Baseline assessment, respiratory and TB screening	If clinically indicated		
Chest x-ray				
PFTs, TB screening if indicated				
Ophthalmic screening *	To assess ocular toxicity	✓		See comments below *
There may be clinical circumstances where the frequency of monitoring may vary and this should be specified by the initiating specialist				

GP responsibilities

- Prescribe hydroxychloroquine.
- Report any adverse drug reactions to the initiating specialist and the usual bodies (e.g. MHRA/CHM).
- Ensure no drug interactions with other medicines.

Adverse effects, precautions and contraindications

Contraindications include pre-existing maculopathy of the eye.
Caution is advised in patients with renal or hepatic disease, with sensitivity to quinine, those with glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency, those with porphyria cutanea tarda which can be exacerbated by hydroxychloroquine and in patients with psoriasis as it appears to increase the risk of skin reactions.
Ophthalmic: (significantly higher risk at doses over 6.5mg/kg/day) retinopathy, corneal changes, impaired or blurred vision. If the patient experiences any visual impairment whilst on treatment, contact the initiating specialist.
Skin: unexplained skin rash; pigmentary changes.
Gastrointestinal: nausea, diarrhoea, abdominal cramps.
Blood: (rarely) bone marrow depression: screened for at outpatient appointments.
Other: cases of muscle weakness (skeletal muscle toxicity more common with long term treatment), hair loss, vertigo, tinnitus, isolated cases of abnormal liver function, headache, nervousness and emotional upset have been reported. May lower seizure threshold in patients with epilepsy.
Pregnancy / Contraception. Women of childbearing potential receiving hydroxychloroquine should be advised to use effective contraception. Patients discovered or planning to become pregnant should be referred to the initiating specialist at the earliest opportunity without discontinuing hydroxychloroquine.
Breastfeeding. Women being treated with hydroxychloroquine should seek specialist advice.

Common drug interactions

Amiodarone, **droperidol** and **moxifloxacin**: increased risk of ventricular arrhythmias: avoid concomitant use.
Antacids: reduce absorption of hydroxychloroquine. Avoid administration within four hours of dose.
Ciclosporin: possible increase in plasma concentration of ciclosporin.
Digoxin: possible increase in plasma concentration of digoxin.
Hypoglycaemic agents: may enhance the effect of hypoglycaemic agents.
Mefloquine: increased risk of convulsions.

Communication

For any queries relating to this patient's treatment with hydroxychloroquine, please contact the specialist named at the top of this document.

This information is not inclusive of all prescribing information and potential adverse effects.
Please refer to full prescribing data in the SPC or the BNF

Date prepared: June 2017 Date of review: June 2022