

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK®

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) summary

The [full CMI](#) on the next page has more details. If you are worried about using this medicine, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

1. Why am I using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK contains the active ingredient mercaptopurine monohydrate. MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK is used to treat acute leukaemia, a cancer of certain blood cells.

For more information, see Section [1. Why am I using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#) in the full CMI.

2. What should I know before I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

Do not use if you have ever had an allergic reaction to MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK, the active ingredient mercaptopurine, or any of the ingredients listed at the end of the CMI.

Talk to your doctor if you have any other medical conditions or take any other medicines. Do not take MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK if you are planning to become pregnant or father a child, or if you are already pregnant or breastfeeding until you have discussed the risk and benefits with your doctor.

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to azathioprine, a medicine used to suppress the immune system.

For more information, see Section [2. What should I know before I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#) in the full CMI.

3. What if I am taking other medicines?

Some medicines may interfere with MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK and affect how it works.

A list of these medicines is in Section [3. What if I am taking other medicines?](#) in the full CMI.

4. How do I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

- **Take MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK exactly as directed by your doctor.**

Your doctor will decide what dose and for how long you will be taking MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK depending on factors such as your age and weight, medical condition, whether you are taking any other medications, and your response to treatment.

More instructions can be found in Section [4. How do I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#) in the full CMI.

5. What should I know while using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

Things you should do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind any doctor, dentist or pharmacist you visit that you are using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK.• Tell your doctor if for any reason you have not taken your medicine exactly as directed.• Visit your doctor regularly so they may monitor your condition and the effectiveness of medicine.• Tell your doctor if you become pregnant, are trying to become pregnant or trying to father a child.
Things you should not do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not stop using this medicine or change the dose without consulting your doctor.• Do not take a double dose to make up for the one you have missed.
Driving or using machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK affects you.
Looking after your medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Store below 25°C, keep dry and protect from light.• Keep out of reach of children.

For more information, see Section [5. What should I know while using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#) in the full CMI.

6. Are there any side effects?

Side effects of this medicine include: nausea; vomiting; frequent infections such as fever, sore throat or mouth ulcers; bruising or bleeding more easily than normal; unusual tiredness, being short of breath and looking pale; painful, swollen joints; skin rash. Side effects that require urgent medical attention include: signs of an allergic reaction, such as chest tightness, difficulty breathing, swelling of face lips and tongue, rash, fainting; weight loss; jaundice, a yellowing of the whites of the eyes or the skin; vitamin B3 deficiency associated with a localised pigmented skin rash, diarrhoea or decrease in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills.

For more information, including what to do if you have any side effects, see Section [6. Are there any side effects?](#) in the full CMI.

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK®

Active ingredient(s): *mercaptopurine monohydrate*

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

This leaflet provides important information about using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK. **You should also speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you would like further information or if you have any concerns or questions about using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK.**

Where to find information in this leaflet:

- [1. Why am I using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#)
- [2. What should I know before I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#)
- [3. What if I am taking other medicines?](#)
- [4. How do I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#)
- [5. What should I know while using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?](#)
- [6. Are there any side effects?](#)
- [7. Product details](#)

1. Why am I using MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK contains the active ingredient **mercaptopurine monohydrate**. MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK belongs to a group of medicines called antineoplastics, which are used in the treatment of cancer.

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK is used to treat **acute leukaemia and chronic granulocytic leukaemia, which are cancers of certain blood cells.**

It works by interfering with the growth of cancer cells.

2. What should I know before I use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK?

Warnings

Do not use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK if:

- you are allergic to mercaptopurine monohydrate, or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.
- Always check the ingredients to make sure you can use this medicine.

Check with your doctor if you:

- are allergic to azathioprine, a medicine used to suppress the immune system
- have recently received or are receiving radiotherapy or chemotherapy
- have recently been vaccinated, or are planning to be vaccinated
- have or have had kidney or liver disease

- have a condition where your body produces too little of a natural chemical called thiopurine methyltransferase (TPMT)
- have inflammatory bowel disease
- have a condition called Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome
- have an inherited mutation in the NUDT15 gene (a gene which is involved in the breakdown of MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK in the body) – you may have a higher risk of infections and hair loss and your doctor may give you a lower dose.
- Vitamin B3 deficiency (pellagra) – Tell your doctor immediately if you have diarrhoea, localised pigmented rash (dermatitis) or deterioration of your memory, reasoning and thinking skills (dementia), as these symptoms may indicate a vitamin B3 deficiency.
- take any medicines for any other condition

During treatment, you may be at risk of developing certain side effects. It is important you understand these risks and how to monitor for them. See additional information under Section [6. Are there any side effects?](#)

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Do not take MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK if you are planning to become pregnant, or father a child unless you and your doctor have discussed the risks and benefits involved.

As with other antineoplastic drugs, MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK may harm eggs and sperm. Reliable contraceptive methods must be used to avoid pregnancy whilst you or your partner is taking this medicine, and for at least 3 months after receiving the last dose of MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK.

Do not take MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK if you are pregnant unless you and your doctor have discussed the risks and benefits involved. It may affect your developing baby if you take it during pregnancy.

Taking MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK during pregnancy may cause severe, excessive itching without a rash. You may also experience nausea and loss of appetite at the same time, which may indicate a condition called cholestasis of pregnancy (a disease of the liver during pregnancy). Talk with your doctor immediately, as this condition can cause harm to your unborn child.

Do not take MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK whilst breastfeeding, as it has been found to pass into breast milk.

Low blood sugar has sometimes been seen in children, mainly in children under the age of six or with a low body mass index. Common symptoms of low blood sugar include, but are not limited to, fast heart rate, shaking, sweating, hunger, confusion and loss of consciousness. Talk to your child's doctor if this happens.

Monitoring and follow up

To check you are receiving the correct dose, and to detect any severe side effects, your doctor may carry out checkups and laboratory tests from time to time. These tests may include

- Blood counts
- Liver function tests
- Kidney function tests

UV Exposure

Whilst using MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK, you may be more sensitive to sunlight. It is advised to limit exposure to the sun, wear protective clothing and use a sunscreen with a high protection.

3. What if I am taking other medicines?

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any medicines, vitamins or supplements that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may interfere with MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK and affect how it works. These include:

- Ribavirin, a medicine used to treat viral infections such as hepatitis C
- Myelosuppressive agents, which may be used after transplants, as part of cancer treatment, or for inflammatory diseases such as ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, psoriasis, ankylosing spondylitis, and rheumatoid arthritis
- Allopurinol, oxipurinol and/or thiopurinol and other xanthine oxidase inhibitors such as febuxostat, which are used for the treatment of gout
- Aminosalicylate derivatives such as olsalazine, mesalazine or sulfasalazine, which are used for inflammatory conditions such as ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, and rheumatoid arthritis
- Methotrexate
- Infliximab
- Anticoagulants, e.g. warfarin
- 6-thioguanine
- Vaccinations with 'live' organism vaccines

MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK affects medicines used to treat or prevent blood clots e.g. warfarin

Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about what medicines, vitamins or supplements you are taking and if these affect MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK.

4. How do I use MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK?

How much to take

MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK should be taken exactly as directed by your doctor.

Your doctor will decide what dose and for how long to take MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK depending on factors such as:

- Age

- Weight
- Pre-existing medical conditions such as kidney or liver disease
- Response to treatment
- Other medications

Your doctor may change the dose and frequency of your medicine over the course of treatment.

When to take MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK

- MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK should be used exactly as directed by your doctor. The dose should not be taken with milk or dairy products.

How to take MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK

Do not crush or chew the tablets.

- MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK is an irritant to the eyes and skin. It is important to wash your hands immediately after handling the tablets. Avoid contact with eyes and be careful not to inhale any particle of the tablet.

If you forget to use MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK

MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK should be used exactly as directed by your doctor. If you miss your dose at the usual time, let your doctor or pharmacist know.

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose you missed.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken your medicine exactly as directed.

Otherwise, your doctor may think your treatment was not working as it should and make unnecessary adjustments to your therapy.

If you use too much MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK

If you think that you have used too much MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK, you may need urgent medical attention.

You should immediately:

- phone the Poisons Information Centre (by calling 13 11 26), or
- contact your doctor, or
- go to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital.

You should do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

5. What should I know while using MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK?

Things you should do

See your doctor regularly so they can check your progress and make sure your medicine is working.

Inform any health care professionals you are seeing that you are on MERCAPTOPYRINE-LINK, especially if you are about

to be started on any new medicines, immunisations, vaccinations or radiotherapy.

Things you should not do

- **Do not have any vaccinations without your doctor's approval.** MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK can lower the number of white blood cells and platelets in your blood. This means that you have an increased chance of getting an infection or bleeding.
- Do not stop taking this medicine or change the dose without first checking with your doctor.
- Do not use MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK to treat any other complaints unless your doctor says to
- Do not give this medicine to anyone else, even if their symptoms seem similar to yours.

Driving or using machines

Be careful before you drive or use any machines or tools until you know how MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK affects you.

Drinking alcohol

Tell your doctor if you drink alcohol.

Looking after your medicine

Keep your tablets in the bottle until it is time to take them.

Store it in a cool dry place away from moisture, heat or light; where the temperature stays below 25°C. For example, do not store it:

- in the bathroom or near a sink, or
- in the car or on window sills.

Keep it where young children cannot reach it.

Getting rid of any unwanted medicine

If you no longer need to use this medicine or it is out of date, take it to any pharmacy for safe disposal.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date.

6. Are there any side effects?

All medicines can have side effects. If you do experience any side effects, most of them are minor and temporary. However, some side effects may need medical attention.

See the information below and, if you need to, ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any further questions about side effects.

Less serious side effects

Less serious side effects	What to do
Gut and digestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea • Abdominal pain 	Speak to your doctor if you have any of these less serious side

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • burning or tingling sensation in the mouth or lips (inflammation of the mucosa, stomatitis). 	effects and they worry you.
Blood and lymphatic system disorders: Production of bone marrow cells may be reduced. You may notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent infections, such as fever, sore throat or mouth ulcers • bruising or bleeding more easily than normal, nose bleeds • unusual tiredness, being short of breath, looking pale. Your doctor will do regular blood tests.	
Metabolism and nutrition disorders: Weight loss	
Immune System disorders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful, swollen joints • Skin rash 	
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender, red bumps, usually found symmetrically on the shins • Hair loss • Persistent cough or breathlessness 	

Serious side effects

Serious side effects	What to do
Signs of an allergic reaction such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling of the face, lips or tongue • Rash • Redness • Hives • Itching • Shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing • Fainting 	Call your doctor straight away, or go straight to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital if you notice any of these serious side effects.
Signs of liver problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jaundice - yellowing of the whites of the eyes or the skin • Fever or chills • Light brown urine 	
Gut and digestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitamin B3 deficiency (pellagra) associated with a localised pigmented skin rash, diarrhoea or decrease in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills. 	
In Children:	

- Low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia) – the frequency is unknown.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything else that may be making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed here may occur in some people.

Reporting side effects

After you have received medical advice for any side effects you experience, you can report side effects to the Therapeutic Goods Administration online at www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

Always make sure you speak to your doctor or pharmacist before you decide to stop taking any of your medicines.

7. Product details

This medicine is only available with a doctor's prescription.

What MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK contains

Active ingredient (main ingredient)	Mercaptopurine monohydrate
Other ingredients (inactive ingredients)	Lactose Maize starch Maltodextrin Magnesium stearate Stearic acid
Potential allergens	Lactose

Do not take this medicine if you are allergic to any of these ingredients.

What MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK looks like

MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK tablets are round, pale yellow coloured, and scored on one side (Aust R 306940).

Who distributes MERCAPTOPURINE-LINK

LINK MEDICAL PRODUCTS PTY LTD
5 Apollo Street
Warriewood, NSW 2102

This leaflet was updated in April 2025.