

# Propylthiouracil in thyrotoxicosis

**This leaflet is for patients prescribed propylthiouracil medication to reduce overactivity of the thyroid gland.**

## About the medication

This medicine is available as a tablet containing Propylthiouracil 50mg.

## How does it work?

Propylthiouracil acts on the thyroid to reduce overactivity.

## How do I take it?

Treatment is started at high dosage often 300-600mg per day taken as 2 divided dosages and is maintained until your thyroid returns to normal activity. The dosage is then gradually decreased so as to maintain normal thyroid activity. This maintenance dosage can vary from patient to patient but is often in the range of 50-150mg per day which may be taken as a single daily dosage. Therapy is usually continued for 12-18 months.

## What side effects can I expect?

Side effects are rare but if they occur are usually seen in the first eight weeks of treatment:

- Headaches, nausea, joint pains, stomach upset.
- Skin rashes.
- Rarely alopecia, hepatitis, vasculitis and lupus erythematosus-like syndrome.
- A rare side effect is bone marrow depression which can present in 1 in 1000 patients. This presents as a severe sore throat, mouth ulcers and fever. If any of these symptoms occur, **stop the drug and contact your GP immediately for a blood count test.** The suppression of the bone marrow is often temporary with the bone marrow recovering after 1-2 weeks.

## Propylthiouracil during pregnancy and breastfeeding

Propylthiouracil is used in pregnancy but we will aim to use the lowest dosage possible. Propylthiouracil does enter mother's milk in small amounts but this does not rule out breastfeeding. We will use the lowest effective dose possible.

## If you have any questions about this leaflet, please contact:

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**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

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