

PRODUCT MONOGRAPH  
INCLUDING PATIENT MEDICATION INFORMATION

<sup>Pr</sup>FLAGYL<sup>®</sup>  
(Metronidazole)  
10% w/w Cream  
Antibacterial - Antiprotozoal

sanofi-aventis Canada Inc.  
1755 Steeles Avenue West  
Toronto, ON  
M2R 3T4

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## RECENT MAJOR LABEL CHANGES

7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS, Gastrointestinal	2025-05
7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS, Neurologic	2025-05

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Certain sections or subsections that are not applicable at the time of authorization of the most recent authorized product monograph are not listed.

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## PART I: HEALTH PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

### 1 INDICATIONS

FLAGYL (metronidazole) is indicated for:

#### Protozoal Infections

FLAGYL is indicated in the treatment of trichomonal infections in women (protozoal infection caused by *Trichomonas vaginalis*).

#### Bacterial Vaginosis

FLAGYL is indicated for the treatment of bacterial vaginosis.

FLAGYL has antibacterial and antiprotozoal properties. To reduce the development of drug-resistant bacteria/protozoans and maintain the effectiveness of FLAGYL and other antibacterial/antiprotozoal drugs, FLAGYL should be used only to treat infections that are proven or strongly suspected to be caused by bacteria/protozoans.

#### 1.1 Pediatrics

Pediatrics (< 18 years of age): No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for pediatric use.

#### 1.2 Geriatrics

Geriatrics: No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for geriatric use.

### 2 CONTRAINDICATIONS

FLAGYL (metronidazole) is contraindicated in patients with a prior history of hypersensitivity to metronidazole or other nitroimidazole derivatives, or any of its constituents, including any non-medicinal ingredient, or component of the container. For a complete listing, see 6 DOSAGE FORMS, STRENGTHS, COMPOSITION AND PACKAGING.

FLAGYL should not be administered to patients with active neurological disorders or a history of blood dyscrasia, hypothyroidism or hypoadrenalism.

### 3 SERIOUS WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS BOX

#### **Serious Warnings and Precautions**

- Cases of severe hepatotoxicity/acute hepatic failure, including cases with a fatal outcome, with very rapid onset after treatment initiation, in patients with Cockayne syndrome have been reported with products containing metronidazole for systemic use. In this population, FLAGYL should therefore only be used after careful benefit-risk assessment and only if no alternative treatment is available (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS).

## 4 DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

### 4.1 Dosing Considerations

Consideration should be given to use FLAGYL therapy in female patients, only when trichomonal infection has been confirmed by appropriate diagnostic techniques. In the male patient, oral metronidazole is recommended in those who are evidently the source of reinfection in female consorts and those with demonstrated urogenital trichomoniasis (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS).

### 4.2 Recommended Dose and Dosage Adjustment

#### Vaginal Treatment

**Cream** – One applicator full of FLAGYL Cream once or twice a day into the vagina for 10 or 20 consecutive days even during menstruation. The applicator should not be used after the 7th month of pregnancy.

#### Severe hepatic disease

Patients with severe hepatic disease metabolize metronidazole slowly, with resultant accumulation of metronidazole and its metabolites. Accordingly, doses below those usually recommended should be administered and with caution. However, due to a lack of pharmacokinetic information, specific dosage recommendations cannot be given for these patients. Therefore, close monitoring of blood metronidazole levels and of the patients for signs of toxicity are recommended (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS).

#### Severe impairment of renal function and anuria

The elimination half-life of metronidazole in anuric patients is not significantly altered. However, the elimination half-lives of the metabolites of metronidazole are significantly increased (3- to 13-fold). Consequently, although metronidazole would not be expected to accumulate in these patients, accumulation of the metabolites would be expected. The potential for toxicity of these metabolites is not known.

#### Patients on hemodialysis

The dose of metronidazole does not need to be specifically reduced since accumulated metabolites may be rapidly removed by hemodialysis.

#### Patients on peritoneal dialysis

Peritoneal dialysis does not appear to reduce serum levels of metronidazole metabolites. Patients with severe impairment of renal function who are not undergoing hemodialysis should be monitored closely for signs of toxicity.

#### Pediatrics (<18 years of age):

The safety and effectiveness of FLAGYL in children is not known. Due to lack of pharmacokinetic data, no dosage recommendations can be made (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS). Therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for pediatric use.

#### Geriatrics:

The safety and effectiveness of FLAGYL in geriatric patients is not known; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for geriatric use.

#### 4.5 Missed Dose

If a dose is missed, the missed dose should be skipped, and the regular dosing schedule should be resumed. The patient should be advised **never to apply a double dose**.

### 5 OVERDOSAGE

#### Symptoms

Single oral doses of metronidazole, up to 12 g have been reported in suicide attempts and accidental overdoses.

#### Treatment

There is no specific antidote. Activated charcoal may be administered to aid in the removal of unabsorbed drug. General supportive measures are recommended.

For the most recent information in the management of a suspected drug overdose, contact your regional poison control centre or Health Canada's toll-free number, 1-844 POISON-X (1-844-764-7669).

### 6 DOSAGE FORMS, STRENGTHS, COMPOSITION AND PACKAGING

Table 1 – Dosage Forms, Strengths, Composition and Packaging

Route of Administration	Dosage Form / Strength/Composition	Non-medicinal Ingredients
Vaginal Cream	Tube: metronidazole 10% w/w in a cream base <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>One full applicator delivers 500 mg metronidazole</li></ul>	glycerin, glyceryl monostearate, methylparaben, purified water, stearic acid, propylparaben and trolamine

FLAGYL (metronidazole) vaginal cream: Available in tubes of 60 g with applicator.

### 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

*Please see 3 SERIOUS WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS BOX.*

#### General

**Metronidazole has been shown to be carcinogenic in mice and rats (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS, Carcinogenesis and Mutagenesis). Unnecessary use of the drug should be avoided. Its**

**use should be reserved for the conditions described in the 1 INDICATIONS section.**

FLAGYL (metronidazole) has no direct activity against aerobic or facultative anaerobic bacteria. In patients with mixed aerobic-anaerobic infections appropriate concomitant antibiotics active against the aerobic component should be considered.

Known or previously unrecognized moniliasis may present more prominent symptoms after treatment with metronidazole.

The effectiveness of condoms or diaphragms could be impaired by some of the fatty constituents contained in the metronidazole gynecological cream, therefore their use during treatment with FLAGYL vaginal cream is not recommended.

If for compelling reasons, metronidazole must be administered longer than the usually recommended duration, it is recommended that patients should be monitored for adverse reactions such as peripheral or central neuropathy (such as paresthesia, ataxia, dizziness, vertigo, convulsive seizures).

Treatment with FLAGYL should be discontinued if ataxia or any other symptom of central nervous system (CNS) involvement occurs.

Administration of solutions containing sodium ions may result in sodium retention. Care should be taken when administering metronidazole injection to patients receiving corticosteroids or to those predisposed to edema.

### **Carcinogenesis and Mutagenesis**

**Metronidazole has been shown to be carcinogenic in the mouse and in the rat.** However similar studies in the hamster have given negative results. Metronidazole has been shown to be mutagenic in bacteria *in vitro*. In studies conducted in mammalian cells *in vitro* as well as in rodent *in vivo*, there was inadequate evidence of mutagenic effect of metronidazole.

Prominent among the effects in the mouse was the promotion of pulmonary tumorigenesis. This has been observed in all six reported studies in that species, including one study in which the animals were dosed on an intermittent schedule (administration during every fourth week only). At very high dose levels (approximately 1500 mg/m<sup>2</sup> which is approximately 3 times the most frequently recommended human dose for a 50 kg adult based on mg/m<sup>2</sup>), there was a statistically significant increase in the incidence of malignant liver tumors in males. Also, the published results of one of the mouse studies indicate an increase in the incidence of malignant lymphomas as well as pulmonary neoplasms associated with lifetime feeding of the drug. All these effects are statistically significant.

Several long-term oral dosing studies in the rat have been completed. There were statistically significant increases in the incidence of various neoplasms, particularly in mammary and hepatic tumors, among female rats administered metronidazole over those noted in the concurrent female control groups. Two lifetime tumorigenicity studies in hamsters have been performed and reported to be negative.

The use of metronidazole for longer treatment than usually required should be carefully weighed since

it has been shown to be carcinogenic in mice and rats.

### **Driving and Operating Machinery**

Patients should be advised not to drive or operate machinery due to the potential for confusion, dizziness, vertigo, hallucinations, convulsions, or eye disorders when treated with metronidazole.

### **Gastrointestinal**

**Use of metronidazole may increase the risk of subsequent inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).**

### **Genitourinary**

Patients should be warned that FLAGYL may darken urine. This is probably due to a metabolite of metronidazole and seems to have no clinical significance (see 8 ADVERSE REACTIONS).

### **Hematologic**

Transient eosinophilia and leukopenia have been observed during treatment with FLAGYL. Hematological tests, especially regular total and differential leukocyte counts are advised if administration for more than 10 days or a second course of therapy is considered to be necessary.

### **Hepatic/Biliary/Pancreatic**

Metronidazole should be used with great caution in patients with a history of hepatic enzyme increase or liver injury associated with previous administration of metronidazole (see 8 ADVERSE REACTIONS).

Cases of severe hepatotoxicity/acute hepatic failure, including cases with a fatal outcome, with very rapid onset after treatment initiation, in patients with Cockayne syndrome have been reported with products containing metronidazole for systemic use. In this population, FLAGYL should therefore only be used after careful benefit-risk assessment and only if no alternative treatment is available. Liver function tests must be performed just prior to the start of therapy, throughout and after end of treatment until liver function is within normal ranges, or until the baseline values are reached. If the liver function tests become markedly elevated during treatment, the drug should be discontinued. Patients with Cockayne syndrome should be advised to immediately report any symptoms of potential liver injury to their physician and stop taking FLAGYL (see 3 SERIOUS WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS BOX and 8 ADVERSE REACTIONS).

Patients with severe hepatic disease (including hepatic encephalopathy) metabolize metronidazole slowly with resultant accumulation of metronidazole and its metabolites in the plasma.

Treatment with FLAGYL should be discontinued should pancreatitis occur once other causes of this disease are excluded.

### **Monitoring and Laboratory Tests**



FLAGYL interferes with serum aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), lactate dehydrogenase (LDH), triglycerides and hexokinase glucose determinations which are based on the decrease in ultraviolet absorbance which occurs when nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide hydrogen (NADH) is oxidized to nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD). Metronidazole causes an increase in absorbance at the peak of NADH (340 nm) resulting in falsely decreased values (see 9 DRUG INTERACTIONS).

### **Neurologic**

Severe neurological disturbances (i.e. convulsive seizures and peripheral neuropathy) have been reported in patients treated with metronidazole. These have been observed very infrequently.

Metronidazole should be used with caution in patients with active or chronic severe peripheral and central nervous system diseases due to the risk of neurological aggravation.

Patients should be advised not to take alcohol or alcohol-containing medicines during metronidazole therapy and for at least one day afterwards because of the possibility of a disulfiram-like (Antabuse effect) reaction.

A rare case of reversible but profound neurological deterioration has been reported following a single oral dose of metronidazole; it is therefore advisable that a patient taking metronidazole for the first time not be left unattended for a period of two hours. The appearance of abnormal neurologic signs demands prompt discontinuation of metronidazole therapy and, when severe, immediate medical attention. Activated charcoal may be administered to aid in the removal of unabsorbed drug, if no more than two or three hours have elapsed since administration of the drug.

Patients treated with metronidazole have been reported to develop posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES). If patients taking metronidazole present with symptoms indicating PRES such as headache, altered mental status, seizures, and visual disturbances, a radiological procedure (e.g. MRI) should be performed. If PRES is diagnosed, adequate blood pressure control and immediate discontinuation of metronidazole is advised. Most patients completely recover after appropriate measures are taken.

### **Psychiatric**

Cases of suicidal ideation with or without depression have been reported during treatment with FLAGYL. Patients should be advised to discontinue treatment and contact their healthcare provider immediately if they experience psychiatric symptoms during treatment.

### **Reproductive Health: Female and Male Potential**

Where there is clinical evidence of a trichomonal infection in the sexual partner, he/she should be treated concomitantly to avoid reinfection.

- **Fertility**

Fertility studies have been performed in mice at doses up to six times the maximum recommended human oral dose (based on mg/m<sup>2</sup>) and have revealed no evidence of impaired fertility.

## **Sensitivity/Resistance**

### Development of Drug-Resistant Organisms

Prescribing FLAGYL in the absence of a proven or strongly suspected bacterial or protozoal infection is unlikely to provide benefit to the patient and risks the development of resistant organisms.

### Potential for Microbial Overgrowth

Prolonged use of FLAGYL may result in overgrowth of non-susceptible bacteria and protozoans. If the infection is not improved following 2 treatment courses of 10 days, cultures should be obtained to guide further treatment. If such infections occur, discontinue use and institute alternate therapy.

Culture and susceptibility studies should be performed to determine the causative organisms and their susceptibility to metronidazole. Based on clinical judgment and anticipated bacteriological findings, therapy may be started while awaiting the results of these tests. However, modification of the treatment may be necessary once these results become available.

In mixed aerobic and anaerobic infections, consideration should be given to the concomitant administration of an antibiotic appropriate for the treatment of the aerobic component of the infection (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS).

Metronidazole has also been used in the treatment of a small number of cases of brain or lung infections (some with abscesses) caused by anaerobic bacteria.

## **Skin**

Cases of severe bullous skin reactions such as Stevens Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN) or acute generalized exanthematous pustulosis (AGEP) have been reported with metronidazole (see 8 ADVERSE REACTIONS). If symptoms or signs of SJS, TEN or AGEP are present, FLAGYL treatment must be immediately discontinued.

## **7.1 Special Populations**

### **7.1.1 Pregnant Women**

Metronidazole crosses the placental barrier and enters the fetal circulation rapidly. Although metronidazole has been given to pregnant women without apparent complication, its effects on human fetal organogenesis are not known; it is advisable that administration of FLAGYL be avoided in pregnant patients and be withheld during the first trimester of pregnancy. Its use in pregnancy should be carefully evaluated. In serious anaerobic infections, if the administration of FLAGYL to pregnant patients is considered to be necessary, its use requires that the potential benefits to the mother be weighed against the possible risks to the fetus.

### **7.1.2 Breast-feeding**

Metronidazole is secreted in breast milk in concentrations similar to those found in plasma. Administration of FLAGYL should be avoided in the nursing mother.

### 7.1.3 Pediatrics

Pediatrics ( $\leq 18$  years of age): No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for pediatric use.

Clinical experience with metronidazole in children is very limited. The monitoring of this group of patients is particularly important.

### 7.1.4 Geriatrics

Geriatrics: No data are available to Health Canada; therefore, Health Canada has not authorized an indication for geriatric use.

## 8 ADVERSE REACTIONS

### 8.2 Clinical Trial Adverse Reactions

*Clinical trials are conducted under very specific conditions. The adverse reaction rates observed in the clinical trials may not reflect the rates observed in practice and should not be compared to the rates in the clinical trials of another drug. Adverse reaction information from clinical trials may be useful in identifying and approximating rates of adverse drug reactions in real-world use.*

The following adverse reactions have been reported with the use of metronidazole:

**Blood and lymphatic system disorders:** transient eosinophilia, neutropenia, very rare cases of agranulocytosis and thrombocytopenia have been reported.

**Cardiac disorders:** palpitation and chest pain.

**Eye disorders:** transient vision disorders such as diplopia, myopia, blurred vision, decreased visual acuity, changes in color vision. Optic neuropathy/neuritis has been reported.

**Ear and labyrinth disorders:** hearing impairment/hearing loss (including hypoacusis, deafness, deafness neurosensory), tinnitus.

**Gastrointestinal disorders:** diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, epigastric distress, epigastric pain, dyspepsia, constipation, coated tongue, tongue discoloration/furry tongue (e.g. due to fungal overgrowth), dry mouth, taste disorders including metallic taste, oral mucositis. Reversible cases of pancreatitis have been reported infrequently.

**General disorders and administration site conditions:** Thrombophlebitis has occurred with I.V. administration. Fever has been reported.

**Hepatobiliary disorders:** increase in liver enzymes (AST, ALT, alkaline phosphatase), cholestatic or mixed hepatitis and hepatocellular liver injury, sometimes with jaundice have been reported.

Cases of liver failure requiring liver transplant have been reported in patients treated with metronidazole in combination with other antibiotic drugs.

Cases of severe hepatotoxicity/acute hepatic failure, including cases with a fatal outcome, in patients with Cockayne syndrome have been reported with products containing metronidazole.

**Immune system disorders:** angioedema, anaphylactic shock.

**Infections and infestations:** rare cases of pseudomembranous colitis have been reported.

**Metabolism and nutrition disorders:** An antithyroid effect has been reported by some investigators but three different clinical studies failed to confirm this. Anorexia has been reported.

**Nervous system disorders:** convulsive seizures, peripheral sensory neuropathy, transient ataxia, dizziness, drowsiness, insomnia, headache, aseptic meningitis.

Very rare reports of encephalopathy (e.g. confusion, vertigo) and subacute cerebellar syndrome (e.g. ataxia, dysarthria, gait impairment, nystagmus, and tremor) have been reported, which may resolve with discontinuation of the drug.

Peripheral neuropathies have been reported in a few patients on moderately high to high-dose prolonged oral treatment with metronidazole. It would appear that the occurrence is not directly related to the daily dosage and that an important predisposing factor is the continuation of oral and/or I.V. medication for several weeks or months.

Profound neurological deterioration, within 2 hours after metronidazole administration has been reported. The occurrence is not directly related to the dosage level.

**Psychiatric disorders:** psychotic disorders including confusion, hallucinations, depressed mood.

**Reproductive system and breast disorders:** A single case of gynecomastia has been reported which resolved on discontinuing metronidazole administration.

**Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders:** Hypersensitivity reactions including flushing, urticaria, rash, and pruritus, very rare pustular eruptions, acute generalized exanthematous pustulosis (AGEP), fixed drug eruption. Cases of Stevens-Johnson Syndrome (SJS) and toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN) have been reported. Many of these case reports revealed the use of concomitant medications known to be associated with SJS or TEN.

**Other:** Proliferation of *Candida albicans* in the vagina, vaginal dryness and burning; dysuria; occasional flushing and headaches, especially with concomitant ingestion of alcohol; altered taste of alcoholic beverages.

Darkening of the urine has been reported. This is probably due to a metabolite of metronidazole and seems to have no clinical significance (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS). Reversible lowering of serum lipids has been reported.

## **8.5 Post-Market Adverse Reactions**

**Cardiac Disorders:** QT prolongation has been reported, particularly when metronidazole was administered with drugs with the potential for prolonging the QT interval.

**Nervous system disorders:** vertigo.

## **9 DRUG INTERACTIONS**

### **9.2 Drug Interactions Overview**

The drugs listed are based on either drug interaction case reports or studies, or potential interactions due to the expected magnitude and seriousness of the interaction (i.e., those identified as contraindicated).

Precautions must be borne in mind, as it is possible that drug interactions usually associated with oral administration of metronidazole may occur following the vaginal administration of FLAGYL.

### **9.3 Drug-Behavioural Interactions**

**Alcohol:** Patients taking metronidazole should be warned against consuming alcoholic beverages and drugs containing alcohol during therapy and for at least one day afterwards, because of the possibility of a disulfiram-like (antabuse effect) reaction (flushing, vomiting, tachycardia). This reaction appears to be due to the inhibition of the oxidation of acetaldehyde, the primary metabolite of alcohol.

### **9.4 Drug-Drug Interactions**

**Busulfan:** Plasma levels of busulfan may be increased by metronidazole, which may lead to severe busulfan toxicity.

**Cyclosporin:** risk of elevation of cyclosporin serum levels. Serum cyclosporin and serum creatinine should be closely monitored when coadministration is necessary.

**Disulfiram:** Administration of disulfiram and metronidazole has been associated with acute psychoses and confusion in some patients; therefore, these drugs should not be used concomitantly.

**Drugs that prolong QT interval:** QT prolongation has been reported, particularly when metronidazole was administered with drugs with the potential for prolonging the QT interval.

**5-Fluorouracil:** Metronidazole has been reported to reduce the clearance of 5-fluorouracil resulting in increased toxicity of 5-fluorouracil.

**Lithium:** Concomitant use of lithium and metronidazole may result in lithium intoxication due to decreased renal clearance of lithium. Persistent renal damage may develop. When metronidazole must be administered to patients on lithium therapy, it may be prudent to consider tapering or discontinuing lithium temporarily when feasible. Otherwise, frequent monitoring of lithium, creatinine and electrolyte levels and urine osmolality should be done.

**Oral anticoagulant therapy (Warfarin type):** Metronidazole has been reported to potentiate the anticoagulant effect of warfarin resulting in a prolongation of prothrombin time and increased hemorrhagic risk caused by decreased hepatic catabolism. This possible drug interaction should be considered when metronidazole is prescribed for patients on this type of anticoagulant therapy. In case

of coadministration, prothrombin time should be more frequently monitored and anticoagulant therapy adjusted during treatment with metronidazole.

**Phenytoin or Phenobarbital:** In single dose studies, metronidazole injection did not interfere with the biotransformation of diazepam, antipyrine or phenytoin in man. However, patients maintained on phenytoin were found to have toxic blood levels after oral metronidazole administration. Phenytoin concentration returned to therapeutic blood level after discontinuance of metronidazole. The metabolism of metronidazole has been reported to be increased by concurrent administration of phenobarbital or phenytoin.

**Vecuronium:** A slight potentiation of the neuromuscular blocking activity of vecuronium has been reported in patients administered metronidazole at a dose of 15 mg/kg.

### 9.5 Drug-Food Interactions

Interactions with food have not been established.

### 9.6 Drug-Herb Interactions

Interactions with herbal products have not been established.

### 9.7 Drug-Laboratory Test Interactions

**Interference with laboratory tests:** Metronidazole may interfere with certain types of blood test determinations in blood (alanine aminotransferase [ALT], aspartate aminotransferase [AST], lactate dehydrogenase [LDH], triglycerides, glucose), which may lead to false negative or an abnormally low result. These analytical determinations are based on a decrease in ultraviolet absorbance, a fact that occurs when nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide hydrogen (NADH) is oxidized to nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD). The interference is due to the similarity in the absorption peaks of NADH (340 nm) and metronidazole (322 nm) at pH 7 (see 7 WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS, Monitoring and Laboratory Tests section).

## 10 CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY

### 10.1 Mechanism of Action

Metronidazole is bactericidal against anaerobic bacteria; it exerts trichomonacidal activity and is also active against *Giardia lamblia* and *Entamoeba histolytica*. Its exact mechanism of action has not been entirely determined as yet. It has been proposed that an intermediate in the reduction of metronidazole, produced only in anaerobic bacteria and protozoa is bound to deoxyribonucleic acid and electron-transport proteins, inhibits subsequent nucleic acid synthesis.

### 10.2 Pharmacodynamics

Metronidazole exerted no central nervous system activity except at very high doses. At doses of 0.5g/kg and above, some anticonvulsant activity was demonstrated in mice and rats, spinal reflexes were inhibited in the anaesthetised cat and hypnosis was produced in the rat.

Metronidazole at doses of 40 to 50 mg/kg administered by intravenous infusion to 4 anaesthetised dogs produced a slight fall in blood pressure and heart rate for 30 to 60 minutes after the infusion. There was little or no effect on the electrocardiographic tracings. With both metronidazole and the

vehicle, there was a tendency for dogs to bleed more readily than untreated animals although plasma prothrombin times remained within normal limits.

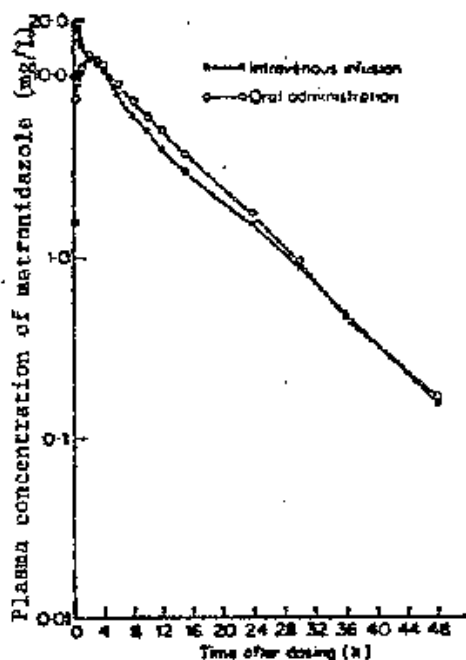
### 10.3 Pharmacokinetics

#### Absorption and Distribution

Following oral administration, metronidazole is completely absorbed with plasma concentration usually reaching a peak within 1 to 2 hours. After single oral 500 mg doses, peak plasma levels of approximately 13 mg/L were obtained. On a regimen of 500mg t.i.d. administered by the i.v. route, a steady state was achieved after approximately three days. The mean peak and trough concentrations measured at that time were 26 and 12 mg/L respectively, and the elimination half-life was approximately 7 to 8 hours. Comparison of the pharmacokinetics of oral and i.v. metronidazole revealed that the area under the plasma metronidazole concentration against time curves were essentially identical.

There is negligible percutaneous absorption following topical application of metronidazole 1% cream. In healthy volunteers who applied a single 100 mg dose of <sup>14</sup>C-labelled metronidazole 2% cream to intact skin, no metronidazole could be detected in plasma after 12 hours. Only about 1% and 0.1% of the applied dose could be found in urine and feces, respectively. After once-daily application of the 1% cream for 1 month, only traces (about 1% of the C<sub>max</sub> of a 200 mg oral dose) could be detected in 25% of patients. In the rest of the patients, no detectable plasma levels were found.

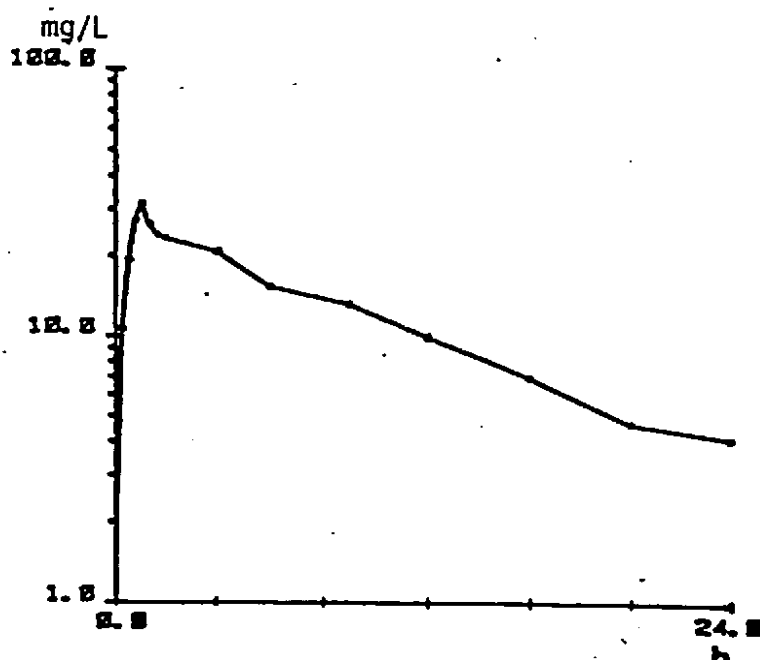
**Figure 1 – Mean plasma metronidazole concentrations following a single oral or intravenous dose of metronidazole (500 mg) (n= 9 females)**



In two kinetic studies in which a single metronidazole 1.5 g dose was infused intravenously over a 50-60 minutes period in volunteers, a peak level of 30-40 mg/L was obtained 1 hour after the start of infusion

and fell to 10 mg/L at 12 h and 4 mg/L at 24 hour.

**Figure 2 – Mean plasma metronidazole concentration following a single intravenous dose of metronidazole (1.5 g) (n=10)**



### **Metabolism & Elimination**

The major route of elimination of metronidazole and its metabolites is via the urine (60-80% of the dose) with fecal excretion accounting for 6 to 15% of the dose. The metabolites that appear in the urine result primarily from side chain oxidation (i.e. 1-( $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl)-2-hydroxymethyl-5- nitroimidazole and 2-methyl-5 nitroimidazole-1-yl-acetic acid) and glucuronide conjugation, with unchanged metronidazole accounting for approximately 20% of the total.

Metronidazole is the major component appearing in the plasma with lesser quantities of the 2-hydroxymethyl metabolite also being present. The ratio of these components varies with time but the maximum concentration of the metabolite ( $C_{max}$ ) is approximately 20% of the  $C_{max}$  of metronidazole for the oral route of administration.

### Protein Binding:

Less than 20% of the circulating metronidazole is bound to plasma proteins.

### Tissue Distribution:

The concentrations of metronidazole found in various tissues and body fluids are given in the following Table 2.



**Table 2 – Concentrations of metronidazole in various tissues and body fluids**

TISSUE OR FLUID	DOSE ADMINISTERED	TISSUE OR FLUID LEVEL	PLASMA LEVEL
Bile	500 mg q.i.d. p.o. x 10 days	26 mg/L (on day 5) 20 mg/L (on day 15)	N/A* N/A
Saliva	500 mg p.o. single dose	7 mg/L (at 2-3 hour)	N/A
Placenta	250 mg p.o. single dose	0 to 1.4 mg/kg (at 4-5 hour)	3.0 - 6.9 mg/L (maternal)
Embryo	250 mg p.o. single dose	0 - 1.0 mg/kg	3.0 - 6.9 mg/L (maternal)
Breast milk	200 mg p.o.	1.3 to 3.4 mg/L	1.8 - 3.9 mg/L
Cerebrospinal fluid	500 mg p.o. b.i.d.	11.0 to 13.9 mg/L	8.3 - 15.4 mg/L
Pus (brain abscess)	400 mg p.o. t.i.d.	35 mg/L	N/A
	600 mg i.v. t.i.d.	inflamed meninges 43 mg/L	N/A
Pus (pulmonary empyema)	400 mg, p.o. q.i.d.	24.2 mg/L	N/A

\* Not available

#### Decreased Renal Function:

Decreased renal function does not appear to alter the single dose pharmacokinetics of metronidazole, although the elimination half-life of the metabolites is prolonged.

#### Haemodialysis

During haemodialysis, the hydroxy metabolite is removed from the plasma about three times more rapidly than in normal subjects. Comparison of the elimination half-lives of metronidazole and two metabolites are given in the following Table 3.

**Table 3 – Metronidazole elimination in normal subjects and in patients with renal insufficiency following a single intravenous dose of metronidazole (500 mg)**

	ELIMINATION HALF LIFE (hours)		
	Patients		
Compound	Normal Subjects	on dialysis	between dialysis
Metronidazole	7.3 ± 1.0	2.6 ± 0.7	7.2 ± 2.4
1-(β-hydroxyethyl) 2-hydroxymethyl-5 nitroimidazole	9.8 ± 1.3	7.8 ± 4.1	34 ± 43
2-methyl-5-nitroimidazole- 1-yl-acetic acid	--	7.9 ± 4.1	138 ± 82

Therefore, no accumulation should occur in anuric patients undergoing regular dialysis.

#### **Continuous Ambulatory peritoneal dialysis**

Metronidazole was given I.V. at 750 mg to five patients undergoing continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD). Insignificant changes were noted in the pharmacokinetic parameters of metronidazole (apparent volume of distribution, elimination half-life, total body clearance). Peritoneal dialysis does not appear to reduce the serum levels of metronidazole metabolites.

#### **Impaired Liver Function:**

In patients with impaired liver function, the plasma clearance of metronidazole is decreased and accumulation can therefore result.

### **11 STORAGE, STABILITY AND DISPOSAL**

FLAGYL (metronidazole) vaginal cream should be stored between 15 and 30° C.

### **12 SPECIAL HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**

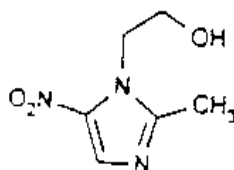
No special handling instructions required.

## PART II: SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

### 13 PHARMACEUTICAL INFORMATION

#### Drug Substance

Proper name: Metronidazole  
Chemical name: 2-Methyl-5-nitroimidazole-1-ethanol  
Molecular formula and molecular mass:  $C_6H_9N_3O_3$ ; 171.15  
Structural formula:



#### Physicochemical properties:

Physical Form: White to pale yellow crystals or crystalline powder.  
Solubility: Sparingly soluble in water and in alcohol; slightly soluble in ether and in chloroform.  
pKa: 2.6  
pH: 5.8 (saturated solution)  
Melting Point: 159-163 °C

### 14 CLINICAL TRIALS

Clinical trial information is not available.

### 15 MICROBIOLOGY

#### Bacteriology

Metronidazole is active *in vitro* against most obligate anaerobes but does not appear to possess any relevant clinical activity against facultative anaerobes or obligate aerobes. In one study the minimum inhibitory concentrations of metronidazole were determined in 730 strains of anaerobic bacteria isolated from clinical specimens. The results are summarized in the following Table 4.

**Table 4 – Activity\* of metronidazole against anaerobic bacteria**

BACTERIA	No. of strains tested	CUMULATIVE PER CENT SUSCEPTIBLE AT THE INDICATED CONCENTRATION (mg/mL)										
		0.1	0.5	1.0	2.0	4.0	8.0	16.0	32.0	64.0	128	256
Bacteroides fragilis group	77	1	12	27	56	84	97	99	100			
Bacteroides melaninogenicus	69	15	81	93	99	100						
Other bacteroides	72	6	42	68	85	93	96	96	99			100
Fusobacterium nucleatum	19	58	95			100						
Other fusobacterium	46	15	76	100								
Peptococcus and Gaffkya	73	3	69	88	96						96	100
Peptostreptococcus	41	29	66	76	81	83	88	90				100
Microaerophilic and anaerobic streptococci	11		27			36					46	100
Gram-negative cocci (Acidaminococcus, Megasphaera, Veillonella)	28	4	57	89	96	100						
Eubacterium	59	7	44	61	66		71		75	80	86	100
Arachnia	3		33									100
Propionibacterium	12		8			17						100
Actinomyces	16					13		19	50	56	63	100
Bifidobacterium	8					36		66	75	87		100
Lactobacillus	20	10	35	55		65	75			80	90	100
Clostridium perfringens	12		25	67	100							
Other clostridium	164	32	54	65	74	84	93	98	100			

\* Determined using an agar dilution technique described in the Wadsworth Anaerobic Bacteriology Manual, 2nd ed. University of California, Los Angeles, Extension Division, 1975.

With rare exceptions, anaerobic gram-negative non-spore forming bacilli and cocci as well as *Clostridium* species were susceptible to concentrations of metronidazole of 16 mg/L or less. A few strains of *Peptococcus* and *Peptostreptococcus* required 128 mg or more per litre of metronidazole for inhibition. Metronidazole was relatively ineffective against *Streptococcus* strains and the gram-positive non-spore forming bacilli.

A series of *in vitro* determinations demonstrated that the minimum bactericidal concentrations against susceptible strains are generally within one dilution of the minimum inhibitory concentrations.

With *Bacteroides fragilis* 10<sup>3</sup> fold increases in inoculum size have resulted in two to four fold increases in M.I.C. and M.B.C. values. The bactericidal effect of metronidazole is not significantly affected by pH changes within the range of 5.5 to 8.0.

#### Susceptibility testing:

Quantitative methods give the most precise estimate of susceptibility to antibacterial drugs. A standardized agar dilution method and a broth microdilution method are recommended. A bacterial isolate may be considered susceptible if the M.I.C. value for metronidazole is not more than 16 mg/L. An organism is considered resistant if the M.I.C. is greater than 16 mg/L.

#### Parasitology

##### Trichomonacidal Activity:

*In vitro* activity was studied using decreasing concentrations of metronidazole, which were added to a series of *Trichomonas vaginalis* cultures maintained at 37°C. A 1:400,000 dilution of metronidazole killed up to 99% of the *trichomonas* in 24 hours.

*In vivo*, 0.5 mL of a 48-hour culture of *Trichomonas vaginalis* injected under the dorsal skin in a control and a test group of mice revealed, seven days later, extensive abscess-like lesions swarming with *trichomonas* in the control group and normal sub-cutaneous tissue free of *trichomonas* in the animals which had received oral metronidazole in a daily dosage of 12.5 mg/kg of body weight.

##### Amebicidal Activity:

*In vitro*, the minimum inhibitory concentration of metronidazole required to immobilize over a 48-hour period a culture of *Entamoeba histolytica* maintained at 37°C was 3 mg/L.

*In vivo*, the amebicidal activity of metronidazole has been demonstrated in various tests.

In the young rat, an intestinal infestation was induced in the caecum by the inoculation of an amebic culture or of a homogenate of caecums obtained from young rats previously infested in the same manner. Metronidazole, 100 mg/kg/day p.o. administered during 4 consecutive days, the first dose being given 24 hours after infestation, protected all the animals. On the other hand, when the drug was administered on 4 consecutive days, starting on the day that the animals were infested, it had a CD<sub>50</sub> of 22 mg/kg/day in the intestinal amebiasis of the young rat. Finally, the CD<sub>50</sub> when the product was given in a single dose 24 hours after infestation, was 49 mg/kg/day p.o.

In the hamster, hepatic amebiasis was induced by the inoculation of a culture of amebae under the capsule of Glisson; metronidazole administered orally during 4 consecutive days protected all the animals at a dosage of 35 mg/kg/day while its CD<sub>50</sub> was 15 mg/kg/day.

##### Activity against Giardiasis:

The activity of metronidazole against giardiasis has been demonstrated in mice infested by *Lambliamuris*. The product administered once a day on two consecutive days had a CD<sub>50</sub> of 30mg/kg/day while its therapeutic index was 1/100.

## 16 NON-CLINICAL TOXICOLOGY

### General Toxicology:

#### Acute Toxicity

The LD<sub>50</sub> values for metronidazole are given in the following Table 5.

**Table 5 – Values of LD<sub>50</sub> for metronidazole**

SPECIES	SEX	ROUTE	LD <sub>50</sub> (mg/kg)
Mouse	--	p.o.	4350
	M	i.p.	3650
	M	i.v.	1170
	F	i.v.	1260
Rat	--	p.o.	5000
	M	i.p.	5000
	M	i.v.	1575
	F	i.v.	1575

Signs of toxicity following oral and intravenous administration of metronidazole were sedation, ataxia and death in mice, and sedation and death in rats.

The acute toxicity of metronidazole was also tested in dogs. Beagle dogs (male or female, 1 dog per dose) were administered single oral doses of 500, 750, 1000, 1500, 3000 or 5000 mg/kg of metronidazole by gastric intubation. The highest oral dosage which did not produce neurological disturbances and severe vomiting was 500 mg/kg. At the higher doses, ataxia, loss of spatial judgment, dozing, walking blindly, a general state of unawareness, convulsion, retching and/or vomiting were observed. There were no deaths but the dogs which received 1500 and 5000 mg/kg were killed on humane grounds 48 and 2½ hours after dosing, respectively.

Pairs of one male and one female beagle were administered total doses of 125, 200 or 250 mg/kg of metronidazole. These were given as 4 or 5 separate injections at hourly intervals, except for the 125 mg/kg dose which was given at half-hourly intervals. At 200 mg/kg, the male trembled during the third injection, the female appeared slightly lethargic following the third injection and its heart rate was rapid during the final injection. Following the 125 mg/kg and 250 mg/kg doses, no sign nor evidence of intolerance at the injection sites was observed.

The ocular irritant effects of 0.5%, 1% and 2% topical metronidazole cream and placebo cream were tested in rabbits. An aliquot (0.1 mL) of one of the cream formulations was placed in the lower lid of one eye of each of three animals. The eyes were subsequently examined for the appearance and severity of ocular lesions after 1 hour, and 1,2,3,4, and 7 days after instillation. Mild conjunctival irritation was noted in several animals in both the active and placebo cream groups. The eyes of the animals in all treatment groups normalized within 1 to 3 days of instillation. None of the rabbits showed any corneal or initial inflammation.

#### Subacute and Chronic Toxicity

Rats were administered metronidazole orally at doses of 0, 25 and 50 mg/kg for a month, 100 mg/kg for fifteen days, and 1000 mg/kg for thirty days. Except for testicular changes which consisted of minor epithelial desquamation and fewer spermatocytes in the epididymus in the 100 and 1000 mg/kg groups, no other abnormalities were observed. No interference with fertility or embryogenesis was observed.

Twenty male and 20 female rats were administered metronidazole intravenously at a dose of 30 mg/kg/day for 4 weeks. There was no evidence of local intolerance at the injection site. A statistically significant decrease in body weight gain was noted in the males only, with their overall weight increase being about 90% that of controls. Mean absolute and relative (to bodyweight) thyroid weights were significantly lower (by approximately 25%) than the control values in both sexes in the treated group. However, at microscopic examination, the architecture of the thyroid glands of treated animals was within normal limits. In another study conducted under the same experimental conditions, assessment of the thyroid function before and at the end of the dosing period revealed no effect of metronidazole in rats.

Dogs were administered metronidazole orally at doses of 0, 25 and 50 mg/kg for a period of one month. They showed no physical or biological alteration and no tissue modification. Other dogs dosed at 75, 110 and 225 mg/kg for a period of six months developed ataxia, muscular rigidity and tremor. No apparent dulling of the sensorium was noted.

Two male and 2 female dogs were administered metronidazole intravenously at doses of 37.5 mg/kg 5 days per week for 4 weeks. In the two males and in one of the 2 females, the relative weights of the thyroids were below control values (31% decrease for males and 26% decrease for females).

### **Carcinogenicity:**

#### Mutagenicity Studies

The mutagenic potential of metronidazole has been measured in two test systems. In a study using a bacterial indicator strain to detect mutagenic effects, positive results were reported. The inherent antimicrobial property of metronidazole further complicates the interpretation respecting genetic and carcinogenic hazard to man. The other test system, the dominant lethal test, measured the effect of metronidazole on mammalian germ cells. Male rats administered doses of metronidazole up to 600 mg/kg/day for five consecutive days, were mated to untreated females. Fetal deaths, the primary measure of dominant lethality, were not increased in those females mated to treated males.

#### Tumorigenicity Studies

Two separate tumorigenic studies were carried out in two different strains of mice with metronidazole. Metronidazole was administered in the diet at daily doses of 75, 150 and 600 mg/kg in both experiments.

A study with the strain of Swiss mice was terminated after 78 weeks, while the other experiment with CF1 mice was terminated at 92 weeks.

There was no evidence that the administration of metronidazole at any dosage level produced an adverse effect upon the physical appearance, behavior, body weight and food consumption. However, the survival in mice in the treated groups was better than that in the controls.

Statistical analysis of necropsy data, gross and microscopic, using life-table and other techniques revealed a significant increase in the rate of benign lung tumors in the groups of mice treated with 600 mg/kg. With the lower dosage, there was also a trend for increased rate, however, the changes were not significant. It should, though, be noted that this type of tumor was also seen in up to 30% of mice in the untreated groups.

In the rat, dose levels of 75, 150 and 300 mg/kg/day were administered orally in the diet for 80 consecutive weeks; a dosage of 600 mg/kg was administered for 13 weeks only. No consistent deleterious effects were observed with doses of 75 and 150 mg/kg for 28-80 weeks on physical, behavioral, clinical laboratory or post-mortem examinations. At the dosage of 300 mg/kg, testicular dystrophy was regularly encountered at 13 weeks or longer and was not reversed by a 28 week recovery (no drug) period; prostatic atrophy was also seen at 26 weeks. The 600 mg/kg dosage group showed a high incidence of testicular dystrophy and prostatic atrophy with a pronounced reduction in the rate of body weight gain. There was a significant increase in the number of benign mammary tumors only in the females of the 300 mg/kg group.

Two independent tumorigenicity studies conducted in the hamster gave negative results.

### **Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology:**

#### *Teratogenicity Studies*

Metronidazole has been evaluated for its embryotoxic and teratogenic potential in the rat, rabbit and mouse. In four studies performed in the rabbit, the compound was administered orally by capsule, by buccal intubation or by gastric intubation at doses of 30 to 200 mg/kg/day for periods ranging from 3 to 13 days during pregnancy. Neither embryotoxic nor teratogenic effects related to drug administration were observed.

In one study metronidazole was administered intravenously to rabbits (18 per group) at doses of 15 or 30 mg/kg/day from days 6-18 of pregnancy inclusive. There were no statistically significant differences between control and treated groups for any foetal parameter, but discrepancies between the numbers of corpora lutea and implantation sites suggested that the drug may have caused a 10-15% increase in pre-implantation loss. No embryotoxic or teratogenic effects were observed.

In five rat studies, metronidazole was administered either at a dietary concentration of 0.13% for 18 days of gestation, or by gastric intubation at dose levels from 50 to 200 mg/kg/day for periods ranging from 10 days (mid-gestation) to 40 days (before and during pregnancy). Drug-related embryotoxic or teratogenic effects were not observed in any of the five studies.

In rats, metronidazole was administered intravenously at doses of 15 or 30 mg/kg/day from days 5-17 of pregnancy inclusive. There was a statistically significant increase in the mean numbers of implantations and live foetuses per litter in the metronidazole treated groups, but no difference in any other foetal parameter.

In one mouse study, two groups of mice were treated from the sixth to the fifteenth day of gestation. Metronidazole was administered by gastric intubation at doses of 10 and 20 mg/kg/day. At the dosage utilized, metronidazole was devoid of any teratogenic activity.



In humans, data has been accumulated on 2500 women who received metronidazole at various stages during pregnancy. The overall incidence of congenital abnormalities remained within the expected limits for untreated mothers and an examination of the reports revealed that there was no trend or consistent pattern in the reported defects nor was there any evidence of causal relationship.

## PATIENT MEDICATION INFORMATION

### READ THIS FOR SAFE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF YOUR MEDICINE

Pr **FLAGYL®**

**(metronidazole, 10% w/w cream)**

Read this carefully before you start taking FLAGYL and each time you get a refill. This leaflet is a summary and will not tell you everything about this drug. Talk to your healthcare professional about your medical condition and treatment and ask if there is any new information available about FLAGYL.

#### Serious Warnings and Precautions

- Cases of severe liver failure (including cases leading to death) in patients with Cockayne syndrome have been reported with products containing metronidazole for systemic use. If you have Cockayne syndrome, your doctor should check your liver function many times during and after your treatment.

#### What is FLAGYL used for?

FLAGYL belongs to a group of medicines called antibacterial - antiprotozoal.

It can be used to treat:

- infections of the genital tract (such as trichomoniasis: a sexually transmitted infection, bacterial vaginosis: bacterial infection of the vagina).

Antibacterial and antiprotozoal drugs like FLAGYL treat only bacterial and protozoal infections. They do not treat viral infections such as the common cold. Although you may feel better early in treatment, FLAGYL should be used exactly as directed. Misuse or overuse of FLAGYL could lead to the growth of bacteria/protozoans that will not be killed by FLAGYL (bacterial/protozoan resistance). This means that FLAGYL may not work for you in the future. Do not share your medicine with anyone.

#### How does FLAGYL work?

FLAGYL works by killing bacteria and parasites (protozoans) that cause infections in your body.

#### What are the ingredients in FLAGYL?

Medicinal ingredients: Metronidazole.

Non-medicinal ingredients: Glycerin, glyceryl monostearate, methylparaben, purified water, stearic acid, propylparaben and trolamine.

#### FLAGYL comes in the following dosage form:

Vaginal cream, 10% w/w

#### Do not use FLAGYL if:

- You are allergic (hypersensitive) to metronidazole, nitroimidazoles (e.g. tinidazole) or any of the ingredients in FLAGYL or components of the container (see What are the ingredients in FLAGYL?).
- You have a disease of the nervous system.
- You have a history of blood problems.

- Have hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid gland) or hypoadrenalism (underactive adrenal glands).

**To help avoid side effects and ensure proper use, talk to your healthcare professional before you take FLAGYL. Talk about any health conditions or problems you may have, including if you:**

- are pregnant, think you are pregnant, or plan to get pregnant.
- are breastfeeding, or planning to breastfeed, as metronidazole is excreted in human breast milk.
- have liver problems.
- have an active or chronic severe disease of the nervous system.
- have any blood disorder (e.g. leukemia, hemophilia, or other). Your doctor may order periodic blood tests.

**Other warnings you should know about:**

**Contact your doctor if the following occurs while taking FLAGYL:**

- You experience mental health problems. Some people taking FLAGYL can experience mental health problems such as irrational thoughts, hallucinations, feeling confused or depressed, thoughts of self-harm or suicide. This can happen to people who have never had mental health problems before.
- You feel sleepy, confused, experience dizziness or vertigo (spinning sensation), see or hear things that are not there (hallucinations), have seizures (convulsions), have temporary eyesight problems (e.g. blurred or double vision). If this happens do not drive or use machinery or tools.
- You feel tingling, pain, numbness or weakness in the arms or legs (peripheral neuropathy).
- You experience cases of severe skin reactions (See the “Serious side effects and what to do about them” table).
- Long-term use of FLAGYL will be carefully weighed by your doctor. Its use should be reserved for the conditions described in the “What is FLAGYL used for” section.
- FLAGYL may darken your urine and this is not considered a concern.

#### Liver problems

- If you have liver problems, advise your doctor.
- Cases of severe liver toxicity/acute liver failure, including deaths, in patients with Cockayne syndrome have been reported with products containing metronidazole.
- If you are affected by Cockayne syndrome, your doctor will also monitor your liver function often while you are being treated with FLAGYL and afterwards.
- Tell your doctor immediately and stop taking FLAGYL if you develop signs of liver injury. This includes stomach pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, fever, malaise, fatigue, jaundice (e.g. yellowing of skin and eyes), dark urine putty or mastic (yellowish to greenish) colored stools or itching.

#### Reproductive Health

- If a sexual partner shows signs of infection, the partner should be examined and treated by the doctor as well.
- Condoms or diaphragms may not work well when you are using FLAGYL. Please talk to your healthcare professional about choosing a different form of birth control while you are using this vaginal cream.

**Tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you take, including any drugs, vitamins, minerals, natural supplements or alternative medicines.**

**The following may interact with FLAGYL:**

- blood thinners, such as warfarin.
- lithium, a drug used to treat bipolar disorder.
- phenobarbital, a drug used to treat anxiety or to control seizures.
- phenytoin, a drug used to control seizures.
- 5-fluorouracil, a drug used to treat cancer.
- busulfan, a drug used to treat cancer.
- cyclosporin, a drug used to suppress the immune system.
- disulfiram, a drug used to treat drinking problems.
- vecuronium, an agent used to relax muscles during surgical procedures.
- medications that may cause heart rhythm changes (QT prolongation), like certain anti-arrhythmics (medicines for heart rhythm disorders), certain antibiotics, and psychotropic medicines.

Do not drink any alcohol while you are taking FLAGYL and for at least 1 day after finishing your course. Drinking alcohol while using FLAGYL might cause side effects, such as feeling sick (nausea), being sick (vomiting), stomach pain, hot flushes, very fast or uneven heartbeat (palpitations) and headache.

FLAGYL may interact with some blood tests. Tell your healthcare professional if you have any upcoming blood tests while you are taking FLAGYL.

#### **How to take FLAGYL:**

One applicator full of FLAGYL Cream (500 mg) once or twice a day into the vagina for 10 or 20 consecutive days, even during menstruation.

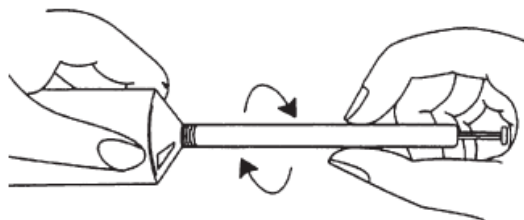
The applicator should not be used after the 7<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy.

#### **Usual dose:**

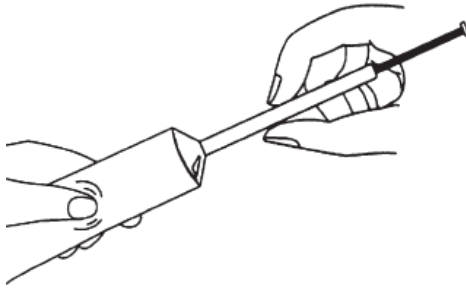
One full applicator delivers 500 mg metronidazole.

#### **Instructions:**

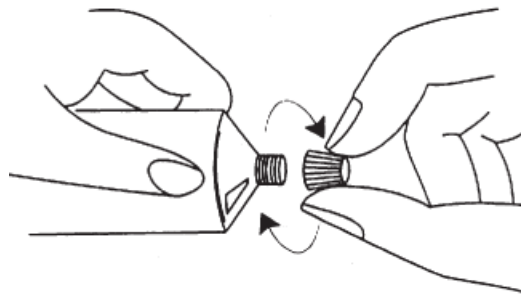
1. Remove the cap from the tube of cream and pierce the sealed end with the cap point. Screw the open end of the applicator onto the threaded end of the tube.



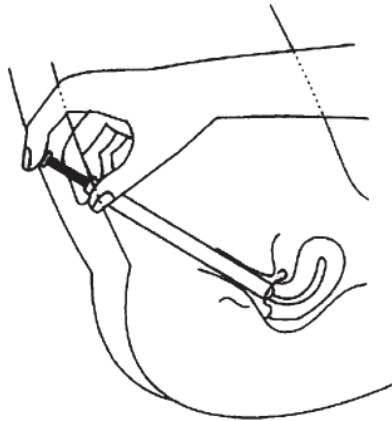
2. Load the applicator by squeezing the tube from the bottom until the red graduation mark on the plunger becomes visible.



3. Remove the applicator from the tube of cream once it is full. Replace the cap on the tube of cream.



4. Lay down on your back with your legs raised. Insert the applicator deeply into the vagina and deposit the cream by depressing the plunger.



5. Remove the applicator and wash it with mild soap and warm water. Rinse thoroughly.

**Overdose:**

If you think you, or a person you are caring for, have taken too much FLAGYL, contact a healthcare professional, hospital emergency department, or regional poison control centre or Health Canada's toll-free number, 1-844-POISON-X (1-844-764-7669) immediately, even if there are no symptoms.

**Missed Dose:**

If you forget to take FLAGYL, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Do not use a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

### What are possible side effects from using FLAGYL?

These are not all the possible side effects you may have when taking FLAGYL. If you experience any side effects not listed here, tell your healthcare professional.

These side effects may include:

- Unpleasant taste in the mouth
- Furred tongue or tongue discoloration
- Feeling sick (nausea), being sick (vomiting), upset stomach, stomach pain or diarrhea
- Hearing loss
- Noise such as buzzing, ringing, or whistling heard in the ear
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling sleepy or dizzy
- Vaginal dryness and burning

Serious side effects and what to do about them			
Symptom / effect	Talk to your healthcare professional		Stop taking drug and get immediate medical help
	Only if severe	In all cases	
<b>Allergic reaction:</b> difficulty swallowing or breathing, wheezing; drop in blood pressure; feeling sick to your stomach and throwing up; hives or rash; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or throat			✓
<b>Severe Cutaneous Adverse Reactions</b> (severe skin reactions that may also affect other organs): - Skin peeling, scaling, or blistering (with or without pus) which may also affect your eyes, mouth, nose, or genitals, itching, severe rash, bumps under the skin, skin pain, skin color changes (redness, yellowing, purplish). - Swelling and redness of the eyes or face. - Flu-like feeling, fever, shills, body aches, swollen glands, cough. - Shortness of breath, chest pain, or discomfort.			✓
Diarrhea	✓		

Serious side effects and what to do about them			
Symptom / effect	Talk to your healthcare professional		Stop taking drug and get immediate medical help
	Only if severe	In all cases	
<b>Liver problems:</b> yellowing of your skin and eyes (jaundice), right upper stomach area pain or swelling, nausea or vomiting, unusual dark urine, unusual tiredness			✓
<b>Nervous system problems:</b> inability to coordinate voluntary movements, problems using your arms and legs, problems with speaking or feel confused, convulsions, tingling sensation on the skin, stiff neck associated with headache, extreme sensitivity to bright light			✓
Fever, unexpected infections, mouth ulcers, bruising, bleeding gums, or extreme tiredness		✓	
<b>Posterior Reversible Encephalopathy Syndrome</b> (brain swelling): Headache, confusion, visual disturbances, seizures			✓
<b>Meningitis</b> (inflammation of the thin tissue that surrounds the brain and spinal cord): sudden, high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, confusion, nausea and vomiting			✓
<b>Pancreatitis</b> (inflammation of the pancreas): severe abdominal pain which may reach through to your back, especially associated with nausea, vomiting and fatigue			✓
<b>Eyesight problems:</b> blurred or double vision		✓	
Feeling depressed		✓	
Pain in your eyes		✓	
Irritation at the site of application		✓	
<b>Mental health problems:</b> irrational thoughts, hallucinations, feeling confused or feeling depressed			✓
Thoughts or actions of self-harm or suicide			✓
<b>Vertigo</b> (spinning sensation)		✓	

Serious side effects and what to do about them			
Symptom / effect	Talk to your healthcare professional		Stop taking drug and get immediate medical help
	Only if severe	In all cases	
Numbness, tingling, pain, or a feeling of weakness, in the arms or legs		✓	
<b>Blood problems</b> (change in the number of white blood cells or blood platelets): infections, fatigue, fever, aches, pains and flu-like symptoms, bruising or bleeding for longer than usual if you hurt yourself		✓	
<b>Heart problems:</b> very fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, dizziness, weakness, blurred vision, fainting.  This may also happen when FLAGYL is taken with drugs that can cause QT prolongation (a heart rhythm condition).			✓
<b>Gastrointestinal problems:</b> Abdominal pain, cramps, diarrhea with possible bloody stools		✓	

If you have a troublesome symptom or side effect that is not listed here or becomes bad enough to interfere with your daily activities, tell your healthcare professional.

### Reporting Side Effects

You can report any suspected side effects associated with the use of health products to Health Canada by:

- Visiting the Web page on Adverse Reaction Reporting ([canada.ca/drug-device-reporting](http://canada.ca/drug-device-reporting)) for information on how to report online, by mail or by fax; or
- Calling toll-free at 1-866-234-2345.

*NOTE: Contact your healthcare professional if you need information about how to manage your side effects. The Canada Vigilance Program does not provide medical advice.*



**Storage:**

FLAGYL should be stored between 15 and 30° C.

Keep out of reach and sight of children.

**If you want more information about FLAGYL:**

- Talk to your healthcare professional.
- Find the full product monograph that is prepared for healthcare professionals and includes this Patient Medication Information by visiting the Health Canada website: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/drug-products/drug-product-database.html>); the manufacturer sanofi-aventis Canada Inc. website ([www.sanofi.com/en/canada](http://www.sanofi.com/en/canada)), or by calling 1-800-265-7927.

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