

PATIENT INFORMATION

Plaquenil

Adjuvant therapy

What is adjuvant therapy?

Adjuvant therapy, also known as 'add-ons', adjunct, complementary or alternative therapies, are recognised as an addition to standard assisted reproductive treatment and may be recommended to you with the intention to increase your success during your fertility treatment. There are numerous options available to you when accessing adjuvant therapies, including but not limited to the technology in laboratories, medical procedures, prescribed medications, nutritional supplements, and traditional medicines such as Chinese medicine, including acupuncture.

At present, the effectiveness of many adjuvant therapies is unknown, with little to no evidence that they will increase the success of your treatment or improve live birth rates. However, your health care provider may recommend adjuvant therapy when considering your medical history and tailoring your treatment plan.

It is important to consider the effectiveness, risks and financial costs of adjuvant therapies.

What is Plaquenil and how it is normally used?

Plaquenil (Hydroxychloroquine sulfate) is used in the treatment of autoimmune conditions. It slows down disease progression and provides relief some symptoms such as pain, swelling and redness.

Conditions it is commonly used in are Rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus and Malaria, it was also more recently used in the treatment of COVID-19.

Why is Plaquenil recommended, and will it increase the success of my treatment?

Your Fertility specialist may refer you to a haematologist to have further investigations if you have a history of recurrent miscarriages or multiple failed implantations. This specialist will likely perform further investigations usually as a blood test, because of these tests they may recommend Plaquenil if an autoimmune response is suspected to potentially being impacting on successful implantation of an embryo.

What are the common side effects?

Some common side effects can include:

- Stomach problems
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache

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- Ringing in the ears
- Nervousness
- Skin rash and itching
- Hair loss

Regarding any additional side effects or contraindications for Plaquenil, please refer to the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) sheet.

Please notify your fertility specialist if you:

- Are experiencing visual disturbance
- Hearing loss
- Suicidal behaviour
- Frequent fevers, chills, bruising, sore throat or mouth ulcers
- Heart palpitations
- Symptoms of hypoglycaemia

Are there risks to using Plaquenil during pregnancy?

Plaquenil is a category D drug. Plaquenil should be avoided in pregnancy except when, in the judgement of the physician, the potential benefits outweigh the potential hazards. When Plaquenil is taken for long periods of time at a high dose, there is an increased risk to the unborn child. It may cause problems with brain function, hearing, balance and vision.

What are the costs?

Cost of Plaquenil: The cost of low dose aspirin will vary depending on the brand and pharmacy. A box of tablets could cost you just over \$30.00.

Is Plaquenil included in the cost of my cycle: Plaquenil is an additional expense and is not included in the cost of your cycle.

The information provided above is intended for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute or replacement for medical advice received from a medical professional. It is important to discuss your individual circumstances and situation with your treating doctor.