

## Leflunomide (Arava®)

### What is Leflunomide (Arava®)?

Leflunomide is an anti-inflammatory agent used to treat rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. It works by suppressing the blood cells that cause inflammation. The brand name for this medicine is Arava.

### How do I take it?

Arava® is taken once a day. The pills are 10 or 20-mg. each and the usual dose is 20 mgs. per day. Sometimes a patient is given a “loading dose” when first beginning this drug. This is a high dose (100-mg.) over a short amount of time (3 days). Follow your doctor’s directions. Do not take more or less medicine than ordered. This medicine can be taken with food.

### What else should I know?

*Arava® may cause **birth defects** in the children of both men and women taking this drug. If you are pregnant or considering having a child, discuss this with your doctor before beginning this medication. Use of an effective form of birth control is critical throughout the course of this treatment and for months after it is stopped.*

Arava® can cause mild liver irritation. Please tell you doctor if you have a history of any alcohol abuse, hepatitis, yellow jaundice, or liver disease. While on Arava® you must limit yourself to 2 alcoholic beverages per week.

Diarrhea may occur after starting medication but this generally is mild and goes away over time. You may take over the counter imodium or kaopectate. Notify your doctor if the diarrhea is severe or does not get better.

Although Arava® does not cause increased susceptibility to infections, your doctor may want to stop methotrexate if you develop a serious infection. Notify your doctor if you have signs or symptoms of an infection.

When you are taking Arava®, it is very important that your doctors know if you are taking any other medicine. This includes prescription and non-prescription medicines as well as birth control pills, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

### Instructions:

#### Loading Dose:

I will take Arava® \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ dose on \_\_\_\_\_, and  
dose day dose day  
\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. On \_\_\_\_\_, I will begin my regular dose.  
dose day day

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#### Regular Dose:

I will take Arava® \_\_\_\_\_ pill at \_\_\_\_\_ every day. I will call my doctor with any problems.  
# time