



## Jeff Donovan MD PhD FRCPC

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### INFORMATION ON DAPSONE

#### What is Dapsone?

- Dapsone is an oral medication which is sometimes used to treat skin infections as well as other skin diseases.
- It is sometimes used for some hair loss conditions such as folliculitis decalvans

#### How is it Dapsone prescribed?

- Dr. Donovan will advise how much and how often to take dapsone and whether it should be taken with vitamin E 800 IU per day.
- The maximum dose of dapsone is 200 mg daily
- Before starting, you will get blood work done. The following are the tests may be ordered by your doctor : ( complete blood count, liver tests, bilirubin, kidney tests, urinalysis, G6PD test)
- **Every week for the first 4 weeks** you will be asked to monitor for shortness of breath, weakness or change in sensation in the hands or feet, sore throat and flu-like feeling and seek medical attention if this occurs. You will also get blood work done every week for the first 4 weeks
- **Then every 2<sup>nd</sup> week for the next 8 weeks** you will monitor for shortness of breath, weakness or change in sensation in the hands or feet, sore throat and flu-like feeling and seek medical attention if this occurs. You will also get blood work done every 2<sup>nd</sup> week now
- **You will get liver and kidney tests (BUN, Cr U/A) every month for three months and then every 6 months**

### **Who should not take Dapsone?**

- Do not take dapsone if you are allergic to dapsone
- Do not take dapsone if you have agranulocytosis (low blood counts of any kind)
- Do not take dapsone if you have allergy to sulfa drugs
- Do not take dapsone if you have G6PD deficiency
- Do not take dapsone if you have cardiovascular disease, liver disease or kidney disease
- Do not take dapsone if you are pregnant or breast feeding

### **Do any medications interact with Dapsone?**

Tell your doctor if you are on any of these medications.

- Trimethoprim
- Probenecid
- Folic acid antagonists like methotrexate
- PABA
- Rifampin
- Sulphonamides
- hydroxychloroquine

### **What are the side effects of Dapsone?**

- Drop in blood counts
- Drop in white blood cells called 'agranulocytosis'. This leads to a serious drop in infection fighting cells known as neutrophils. The risk is about 1/250 and can be very serious due to increased risk of infection. It occurs on average at about 7 weeks .
- Decreased oxygen carrying ability of the red blood cells – this leads to blue lips, headaches and yawning
- Sore throat – especially after 4 weeks
- Acute psychosis (seeing and hearing things without them being there)
- Neuropathy – weakness in the muscles of hands and legs, including wasting of the hand muscles
- Atrophy of the optic nerve
- Nausea, vomiting, pancreatitis
- Gall bladder irritation/perforation

## **Under what situations should I stop Dapsone?**

### **Stop dapsone and get medical attention if the following happens**

Stop if you develop swelling of the lips, shortness of breath, rash and seek medical attention

- Stop if you develop blue lips, yawning, and headaches
- Stop if you get a sore throat
- Stop if you develop vision changes
- Stop if you develop vomiting and abdominal pain
- Stop if you develop weakness in your hands or legs
- Stop if you feel unwell in any way

