

## What are the side-effects of Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

All medicines can have side effects, some are serious but most of the time, they are not. Some of the more common side-effects include:-

- Nausea, stomach upsets
- Headaches, hair loss
- Skin rashes, hives, itchiness
- Pain in muscles and joints

Very rarely, the liver function may become abnormal or the bone marrow may be affected resulting in reduced production of white blood cells (agranulocytosis).

## What should I do if I develop side-effects whilst taking Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if the symptoms worry you. If you develop new symptoms of sore throat, mouth ulcers or flu-like symptoms, you will need to have a blood test to check your white blood cells.

## What should I do if I become pregnant whilst taking Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

Tell your doctor as soon as you find out that you are pregnant. Both Carbimazole and Propylthiouracil are equally effective in controlling hyperthyroidism during pregnancy. If you are taking Carbimazole, some doctors may change you to an equivalent dose of Propylthiouracil during your pregnancy. Graves' hyperthyroidism tends to improve during pregnancy, therefore the dose of Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil may need to be reduced.

## Will I be able to breast-feed my baby whilst taking Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

In small doses, Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil will not affect the thyroid function of your baby. Your doctor will most probably put you on Propylthiouracil if you decide to breastfeed as it is transferred to breast milk much less than Carbimazole. If you require large doses of Propylthiouracil to control your hyperthyroidism and you continue to breastfeed, your baby may need to have a blood test to check the thyroid function.



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## Information Brochure: Anti-thyroid medication Carbimazole/ Propylthiouracil



## My doctor says I have to take Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil

### What is Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

Carbimazole (brand name Neo-mercazole) and Propylthiouracil are medicines that reduce the production of thyroid hormones from the thyroid gland. Carbimazole comes in a tablet strength of 5mg and Propylthiouracil comes in a tablet strength of 50 mg.

### What are thyroid hormones?

Thyroid hormones are produced by the thyroid gland that is situated in the front of your neck, just below the Adam's apple. There are two major thyroid hormones, thyroxine (known as T4) and triiodothyronine (known as T3). They are important for the growth, development and normal function of your body, including regulation of your body temperature.

### If my body needs thyroid hormones, why do I have to take Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil?

Your doctor would have asked you to take Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil because your thyroid gland is producing too much thyroid hormones. When the thyroid gland produces too much thyroid hormone, the condition is called hyperthyroidism or commonly known as over-active thyroid.

Causes of hyperthyroidism include:-

- Graves' disease—caused by your own immune system's reaction to the thyroid gland
- Toxic multinodular goitre
- Toxic adenoma—benign single thyroid nodule that is functioning autonomously

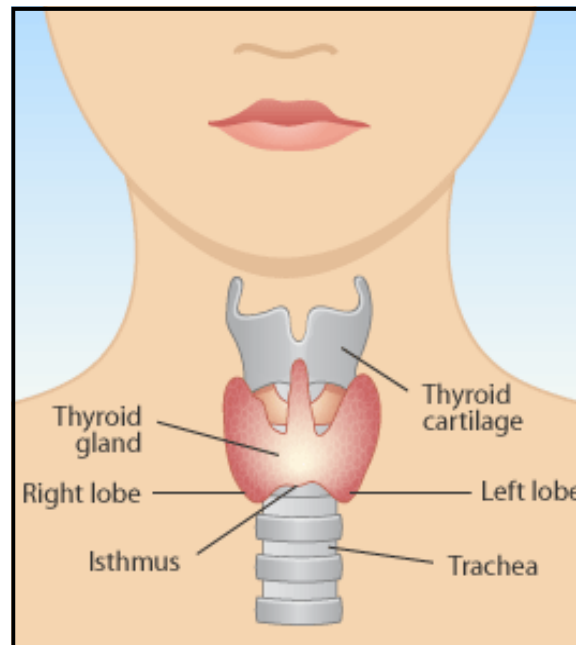
### What are the symptoms and signs of hyperthyroidism?

When your body has too much thyroid hormones, you will not feel well. You may have:-

- Heat intolerance, weight loss despite eating more, fatigue
- Irritability, restlessness, insomnia
- Sensation of heart racing (palpitation), breathlessness
- Diarrhea, irregular menstruation in women

### How long do I have to take Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil for?

Your doctor will discuss the treatment options with you. It depends on the aim of treatment. If you have Graves' disease, you may need to take a course of Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil for 12 to 18 months at the lowest dose required to control the hyperthyroidism. Some doctors may give you a fixed dose of Carbimazole in combination with Thyroxine for 6 to 9 months as a "block and replace" treatment regimen.



If you have toxic multinodular goitre or toxic adenoma, you may need to take the medication as a temporary measure until your condition is treated with radioiodine or surgery. You may need to take a small dose of Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil on a long-term basis if you are not suitable to have radioiodine treatment or surgery.

Continue taking Carbimazole / Propylthiouracil until your doctor asks you to stop.

### How does my doctor know that I am on the right dose of Carbimazole or Propylthiouracil?

Your doctor will assess your progress based on your symptoms as well as a blood test to check your thyroid function on a regular basis. The blood test is done initially every few weeks and then every few months when your thyroid status is more stable. Your doctor will check your thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), free T4 and free T3. Based on the blood results, your medication dose may be adjusted.



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