Azathioprine
A drug that suppresses the immune system

Common side effects

- Allergic reactions like vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, muscle pain & rash - withdraw the medicine
- Watch for signs or symptoms like bruising, bleeding or infections
- Hair loss. Inflammation of the bowels in patients also taking steroids
- Liver damage and jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
- Susceptibility to infections

Patients must have regular blood tests
Note that benefits of treatment are usually greater than the risks; consult your doctor

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Common Interactions with other medicines

- + Allopurinol = enhanced effects and increased toxicity of azathioprine. Dose of azathioprine must be reduced to one quarter of usual dose.
- + Warfarin = INR reduced (anti-coagulant effect of warfarin is reduced)
- + Sulfamethoxazole (as co-trimoxazole) and/or trimethoprim = increased risk of toxicity to the blood cells and counts.
- + Aminosalicylates (like mesalazine) = possible increased risk of having low white blood cells

Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are taking these or any other medicines

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