

Patient information

Nebulised Colomycin

Department of Respiratory Medicine

Why have I been prescribed nebulised colomycin?

The sputum of people with bronchiectasis can become infected with bacteria called *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Colomycin is an antibiotic used to treat *Pseudomonas*. It can be given by intravenous injection (into a vein) or inhaled into the lungs through a nebuliser.

Nebulised colomycin can be used to treat a current chest infection or to reduce the number of chest infections happening in the future. The treatment is usually started by a chest consultant at the hospital. You can get a prescription for more colomycin from your family doctor (GP).

You will receive the first dose in hospital and will be shown how to set up the nebuliser machine.

Why is colomycin given through a nebuliser?

A nebuliser allows colomycin to be inhaled directly into the airways. The risk of side-effects is small since only small amounts reach the blood stream.

Before you use colomycin please read the patient information leaflet which comes with your medication.

This medication has been prescribed only for you. It is dangerous to pass it on to others as it may harm them.

Do not use colomycin if:

- you are allergic to colomycin (colistimethate sodium) colistin or another antibiotic called polymyxin B.
- you suffer from myasthenia gravis (a condition which causes muscle weakness and excessive tiredness).

Talk to your doctor if you have porphyria (a rare inherited condition) or kidney problems. Tell your doctor if you are taking other medicines.

Sometimes colomycin can lead to unwanted effects such as

- Coughing and bronchospasm (a tight feeling in the chest, increased shortness of breath, wheeze).
- A sore throat and mouth.
- Thrush infections (candida) of the mouth or throat.

Should you experience any of these symptoms stop the medication and inform us on 0151 706 3310.

If you experience any difficulty in breathing, you should seek urgent medical attention.

How should I store colomycin?

- Keep your colomycin out of the reach and sight of children.
- Do not store colomycin above 25°C.

How often will I take my treatment?

- You should take the nebulised colomycin every 12 hours. Colomycin takes ten to fifteen minutes to nebulise, plus preparation time.
- If you forget to take your nebulised colomycin do not worry, just take your next dose as scheduled.

How should I take nebulised colomycin?

- Before taking colomycin you may need to take reliever medication (Salbutamol or Terbutaline) to open up the airways or to help prevent your chest getting tight.
- Do breathing exercises to clear the sputum from your lungs before taking colomycin. This will give you the best result from treatment.
- If you have been shown how to do postural drainage positioning and chest clearance (Active Cycle of Breathing) by a physiotherapist, you should do this after taking Salbutamol but before you take the colomycin.
- Colomycin should be nebulised in a well ventilated room, ideally without any other people, animals or pets present.

How do I prepare my medication?

Wash and dry your hands. Make sure you have all the following items:

- Compressor - This is the electric machine that drives the nebuliser with air.
- AeroEclipse XL mouthpiece, chamber and tubing – This is kit which you inhale the medication through.
- Sodium Chloride 0.9% - You will need 2.5 ml of sodium chloride for each million unit of colomycin.

- Colomycin - colomycin (also called colistimethate sodium) is available in one or two million unit bottles.
- Reliever medication - If you have a reliever inhaler or nebuliser (salbutamol or terbutaline) make sure you have it nearby in case your chest gets tight.
- A sharps bin – to dispose of the glass vial and foil cap.

How do I mix my colomycin?

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Gently tap the bottle of colomycin to loosen the powder inside.
3. Open the bottle of colomycin. Lift the plastic lid and tear off the foil seal around the rubber stopper. Take care as the foil may be sharp.
4. Remove the rubber stopper and keep it safely to one side.
5. Twist open the vial of sodium chloride 0.9%.



Important

Use one sodium chloride (0.9%) 2.5 ml vial of for each million units of colomycin.

- If you take a **one million unit bottle** of colomycin, use **one** sodium chloride 2.5 ml vials.
- If you take one, **two million unit bottle** of colomycin, use **two** sodium chloride 2.5 ml vials.

6. Squeeze the sodium chloride in to the bottle of colomycin and replace the rubber stopper.
7. Gently swirl to mix the contents of the bottle. Do not shake as this will cause the colomycin to froth.



8. When all the powder has dissolved pour the liquid colomycin into the 'AeroEclipse XL ban' nebuliser chamber.



9. To do this, unscrew chamber of the AeroEclipse XL from the top.



10. Carefully screw the 'Aeroeclipse XL' back together again making sure you do not spill any liquid.

- Use the colomycin solution straight away. Throw away any unused colomycin liquid at once. Colomycin must not be mixed with other nebuliser medication.

How do I take my colomycin?

- Sit upright and put the mouthpiece gently between your teeth.
- Switch on the nebuliser machine and breathe normally through your mouth.

- Keep the AeroEclipse Nebuliser chamber upright to stop the liquid running into your mouth.
- Don't talk while you are taking the treatment to avoid wasting the medicine.
- Colomycin has a strong taste and makes your mouth water so have tissues nearby. Swill your mouth out with water after use.

Cleaning the equipment

1. The nebuliser kit should be cleaned after every use.
2. Remove the tubing from the bottom of the nebuliser chamber.
3. Unscrew the nebuliser top.
4. Soak the mouthpiece, chamber and top of the nebuliser kit in a mild solution of liquid dish detergent and lukewarm clean water for about five minutes.
5. Rinse thoroughly with clean water, shake out excess water and allow to air dry before reassembling.
6. Or the three parts can be placed on the top rack of the dishwasher.
7. Run the dishwasher on a normal cycle, do not heat dry.
8. Shake out excess water and allow to air dry before reassembling. Do not wash on a cycle with overly dirty dishes.
9. Store the nebuliser kit in a clean plastic bag or container.

Other Useful Information

- When the colomycin powder is mixed with the saline 0.9% it is normal for the mixture to look hazy.
- Colomycin should ideally be used immediately after preparation, if this is not possible it may be stored in a refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours.
- Colomycin should not be mixed together with other nebulised medicine and a separate administration set should be used for colomycin only.
- Using the filter as directed can reduce the amount of the drug passing into the surrounding air.
- Your doctor/consultant will advise how long your treatment should last.
- Do not use colomycin after the expiry date.

Nebuliser equipment

- You have been provided with a loan nebuliser machine for the medication that your Doctor/Nurse requires you to take.
- After six months if the therapy is beneficial and your doctor would like the therapy to continue we will ask community stores to issue you with a long term nebuliser machine and request you kindly return our loaned nebuliser.

- The medication will be provided by your GP as part of your regular medication as per Pan Mersey guidelines.
- The nebuliser chamber and tubing (AeroEclipse XL) should be replaced every six months. After the first six months the kits will be provided by community stores.
- The filters for the air compressor machine should be changed every three months. (If ordered via community stores these will be provided by them).

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

Telephone number: 0151 706 3310

NHS Direct

Telephone 111

Asthma + Lung UK

The White Chapel Building

10 Whitechapel High Street

London, E1 8QS

Telephone (helpline) 0300 222 5800 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

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