DOXYCYCLINE and TUDCA

Information for Patients

Australian Amyloidosis Network

General Information

Doxycycline is a common antibiotic used to treat simple bacterial infections. Tauroursodeoxycholic acid ("TUDCA") is a bile salt.

In a small percentage of people with transthyretin amyloidosis the combination of these tablets showed a *slowing* of organ damage from amyloidosis[1]. Hence it may be able to decrease the rate of amyloid depositing inside the body. This therapy does not cure the disorder. This therapy does *not* clear the amyloid that is already present.

How to Access

TUDCA is *not* readily available in Australia. It is not approved for use in Australia.Therapeutic Goods Administration approval must be obtained before it can be imported for use. In addition, it requires self-funding, as it is not Medicare rebated. The medication costs approximately $112 per month (not including GST) as of April 2019 and a community pharmacist will add an importation, processing and dispensing fee. The total cost per month can range from $200-250.

Doxycycline is not Medicare funded for use in amyloidosis (although it is Medicare rebated for certain other disorders).

Side Effects

Doxycycline can cause stomach upset with symptoms of nausea, vomiting and reflux or "heartburn". It can cause skin rashes if you are in the sun for too long and this may be severe in rare cases.

TUDCA does not usually cause side effects. In small numbers bowel upset may occur.

How to take

Doxycycline comes in 100mg dose tablets (or capsules) and the dose is 1 tablet morning and night. This should be taken with food or milk.

TUDCA comes in 250mg dose capsules and the dose is one capsule three times a day.

This treatment is meant to be continued indefinitely so long as it appears to be working and is not causing significant side effects.

References

1. Obici L et al, Doxycycline plus tauroursodeoxycholic acid in transthyretin amyloidosis: a phase II study Amyloid 2012, 19 (51) : 34-36 with update at International Symposium of Amyloidosis, 2014