

### **ITRACONAZOLE (SPORANOX)**

Itraconazole is an antibiotic used to treat superficial yeast and fungus infections of the skin and nails. This medication is normally taken on a once or twice per day basis depending on your condition. Unfortunately it is quite expensive.

The majority of patients who take Itraconazole have no side effects. Like any medication there are potential side effects such as stomach upset or an allergic reaction. These reactions are not common with this medicine.

The duration of treatment with Itraconazole depends on the condition that is being treated. For example, many superficial skin infections require only one to four weeks of therapy. If however you are treating a nail infection, it may require three to twelve months of treatment.

Itraconazole is often used to treat fungal nail infections. In order to treat this problem the medication is taken in a specific way known as pulse therapy. That is the pill is taken twice a day for one week and then not taken for the next three weeks. This cycle of one week on and three weeks off is repeated until the nails are completely clear. The reason this is effective is because the pill forms a reservoir in the nail and allows it to continue to work even if it is not taken on a daily basis. Therefore the pill is taken twice a day for one week and not taken for the next three weeks and this cycle repeated again.

It is important to realize that this medication can interact with other medicine. The most important interaction is that Itraconazole can increase the blood levels of Hismanal and Viagra. Hismanal is a commonly prescribed antihistamine medication that does not cause drowsiness. It is very important that you notify your physician that you are taking Itraconazole if he will prescribing any other medication.

Other medications that can interact with Itraconazole include: Coumadin, Cyclosporin, Digoxin, Dilantin, Propulsid, Mevacor and Zocor (cholesterol lowering medication) and Halcion and Valium (anti-anxiety medication). Also antacids can interfere with the absorption of Itraconazole. If you are taking any of these medications, please let me know.

Like most other medications, pregnant or nursing mothers should not take Itraconazole. If there is a chance you are pregnant, please stop this medication and call the office.

In summary Itraconazole is a safe and effective medication in treatment of superficial yeast and fungus infections. If you have any other questions about these medications, please do not hesitate to ask me before you leave the office.