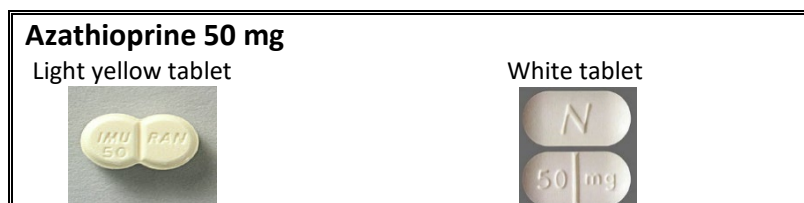


## AZATHIOPRINE [AZ-A-THIGH-O-PREEN]

- Also known as Imuran, Teva-Azathioprine. Apo-azathioprine
- Available as an oral tablet or suspension specially made by the pharmacy

### What does the medication look like?

There are several brands for this medication and you may not see yours shown exactly below. Please check with your transplant pharmacists if you have any questions.



### What is this medication for?

Azathioprine is a medication used to lower your body's immune system to prevent your transplanted organ from being rejected. It makes your white blood cells weaker so they cannot damage the new organ.

### How should I take this medication?

It is important to take your medications at the same time each day in order to keep a steady amount (drug level) in your body.

<p>For azathioprine: take this medication <b>once a day</b> (for example 9 AM)</p>	<p>Your medication times: _____</p>
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- Azathioprine should be taken **with or without food**. **Taking it with food can help** to decrease stomach upset, but may be taken on an empty stomach if preferred. Be consistent, if you take it with food, always take it with food; if you take it on an empty stomach, always take it on an empty stomach.
- Blood pressure medications called ACE inhibitors such as: benazepril (Lotensin®), captopril (Capoten®), enalapril (Vasotec®), fosinopril (Monopril®), lisinopril (Zestril, Prinivil®), quinapril (Accupril®), ramipril (Altace®), trandolapril (Mavik®), perindopril (Coversyl®) may lower your white and red blood cells when taken with azathioprine.  
**Be sure to notify your transplant team if you begin any of these medications as additional blood monitoring may be required.**
- In case you need to go for a procedure or an operation that requires you to not eat anything before (fasting), you **must** still take your transplant medications with a sip of water at your regular time.
- **Do NOT take medications for gout called allopurinol (Zyloprim®) and febuxostat (Uloric®) while on azathioprine; this may result in very severe side effects! Contact your transplant pharmacist.**

***Remember: If you are pregnant or are planning to become pregnant, you must check with your doctor or transplant team as soon as possible.***

### **Missed Dose or Vomited Dose:**

**If you miss a dose**, take your medication as soon as you remember and then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. If you are more than half way to your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular schedule. Do not double or take extra doses.

If you **missed more than 1 day** of anti-rejection medications, contact your transplant team immediately for further instructions.

**If you vomit** within 30 minutes of taking the dose or if you see some of the medication come up, then repeat the dose. Otherwise, just continue on with your next scheduled dosing time.

### **What are some possible side effects of this medication?**

<b>Side Effect</b>	<b>Management</b>
<b><i>Heartburn, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea</i></b>	Take azathioprine with food if you're finding it upsetting your stomach. This usually resolves with continued use. Notify your doctor or transplant team if this becomes bothersome.
<b><i>Azathioprine can lower the number of your white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets.</i></b>  <b><i>You may be at an increased risk for infection and bleeding</i></b>	Regular blood work will be done to check your blood cell counts. Check with your doctor if you have any: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs or symptoms of infection (fever or chills, cough, sore throat or pain or difficulty passing urine)</li> <li>• Signs of bleeding (bruising, tarry stools, vomiting of blood or blood in the urine)</li> <li>• Signs of decreased red blood cells (weakness or tiredness, fainting spells, light-headedness)</li> </ul> <p>Try to avoid close contact with people who have active infections (like cold/flu). Practice frequent hand washing.</p>
<b><i>Liver damage</i></b>	This is an <u>uncommon</u> side effect.  Notify your doctor if you experience yellow coloured skin or eyes or stomach or abdominal pain. You will have regular blood work done to monitor your liver function.
<b><i>Hair thinning or loss</i></b>	This is an uncommon side effect. Check with your doctor if any of these are bothersome or persistent.
<b><i>Cancer</i></b>	Taking this medication may increase your risk of skin and other cancers. Please inform your transplant team if you are diagnosed with cancer. For additional information, please see section on "Cancer Risk".