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MEDICATION
GUIDE
(pen)

REBETRON™
Combination Therapy
containing
REBETOL®
(ribavirin, USP) Capsules
and
INTRON® A
(interferon alfa-2b, recombinant)
Injection

You and your partner must not become pregnant while either of you are being treated with Rebetron Combination Therapy containing INTRON A and Rebetol (ribavirin, USP) Capsules or for 6 months after stopping therapy. Do not use Rebetron Combination Therapy if you or your partner are pregnant. If you or your partner become pregnant during treatment or within 6 months of stopping treatment, call your doctor right away. You or your doctor should also call (800) 727-7064.

IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

Please read this information carefully before you begin taking your combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy. It is important to read this each time your prescription is refilled in case new information becomes available. This summary does not tell you everything about combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy. Your doctor is the best source of information about these medicines. You should talk with him or her before starting therapy and at your regular check-ups. You may also ask your doctor or pharmacist for a copy of a longer leaflet about this therapy that is written for health professionals.

What is the most important information I should know about combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

- 1. COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD.**
 - If you or your partner are pregnant, you should not receive combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy.**
 - Pregnancy should not be planned while you or your partner are on therapy or for 6 months after therapy.**

- **If you or your partner become pregnant while on therapy, or during the 6 months after stopping therapy, immediately report your pregnancy to your doctor.**
 - BOTH MALE AND FEMALE PATIENTS MUST USE 2 EFFECTIVE FORMS OF CONTRACEPTION DURING TREATMENT AND FOR THE 6 MONTHS AFTER TREATMENT IS COMPLETED.
 - IF YOU OR YOUR PARTNER ARE A WOMAN OF CHILDBEARING AGE, YOU OR YOUR PARTNER MUST HAVE A NEGATIVE PREGNANCY TEST IMMEDIATELY BEFORE BEGINNING TREATMENT, AS WELL AS A NEGATIVE PREGNANCY TEST EACH MONTH DURING TREATMENT AND FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER STOPPING TREATMENT. Because combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy could cause death, serious birth defects, and harm to your unborn child, BOTH YOU AND YOUR PARTNER MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. You must use effective contraception even if you believe that you are infertile or your fertility has been reduced. You should discuss with your doctor how you or your partner can prevent getting pregnant.
2. **REBETOL therapy causes anemia, which is a decrease in the number of red blood cells you have. This can be dangerous, especially for patients who already have heart or circulatory (cardiovascular) problems. Talk with your doctor before taking combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy if you have or have ever had any cardiovascular problems.**
 3. Combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy may cause serious psychological problems or cause psychological problems you are currently experiencing to become worse. A few patients have had thoughts about killing themselves and have committed suicide. You should talk with your doctor immediately if you experience any new or worsening psychological problems.
 4. Combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy should be used only by patients who have never been treated with any interferon or by patients who have had their hepatitis C infection return after having been successfully treated with interferon alone.

What is combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

REBETOL combination therapy consists of two separate medications, REBETOL Capsules (ribavirin) and INTRON A Injection (interferon). REBETOL is an antiviral agent (fights infection), but does not work when used by itself to treat chronic hepatitis C. INTRON A generally helps the body's immune system to fight infections. It is not known how the combined products work together to fight the hepatitis C infection.

This combination of medicines is used to treat hepatitis C infection in patients who never received any interferon treatment and in patients who previously received interferon treatment alone but whose infection then returned.

Combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy may reduce the amount of hepatitis C virus in the blood stream to below the level that can be measured by a laboratory test.

It is not yet known if combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy will cure hepatitis C or prevent

cirrhosis, liver failure, or liver cancer that can result from being infected with the hepatitis C virus.

It is also unknown if combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy will prevent one infected person from infecting another person with hepatitis C.

Who should not take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

DO NOT USE these medicines if:

- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER ARE PREGNANT.**
- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER INTEND TO BECOME PREGNANT AT ANY TIME DURING TREATMENT OR DURING THE 6 MONTHS AFTER TREATMENT.**
- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER BECOME PREGNANT DURING TREATMENT. COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD. Therefore, both you and your partner MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) DURING THERAPY AND FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER STOPPING THERAPY.**
- You are allergic to any of the ingredients in REBETOL Capsules or INTRON A Injection or to any alpha interferon.
- You have autoimmune hepatitis (hepatitis caused by cells in your body attacking each other)

If you have any of the following medical conditions or other serious medical problems, you should discuss these with your doctor before taking this medicine:

- High blood pressure, have had a heart attack, or other heart problems, because combination therapy may cause heart problems to become worse.
- Blood disorders; including anemia (low red blood cell count), thalassemia (Mediterranean anemia), and sickle-cell anemia, because combination therapy may further reduce the number of red blood cells you have. This may make you feel dizzy or weak and could worsen any heart problems you might have.
- Kidney problems.
- Liver problems (except hepatitis C infection).
- Nervous or mental problems (such as depression, anxiety, etc.), because the combination could make these problems worse.
- Body organ transplant and are taking medicine that keeps your body from rejecting your transplant (suppresses your immune system).
- Thyroid disease.
- Cancer.
- Infection with hepatitis B virus and/or human immunodeficiency virus (the virus that causes AIDS).
- Diabetes.
- Previously failed interferon therapy for hepatitis C.

How should I take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

Your doctor has determined the correct dose of REBETOL capsules based on your weight. Your doctor

may adjust your dose of REBETOL and/or INTRON A according to your response to these medicines. Routine blood tests will help your doctor to monitor your response to treatment. The recommended doses of INTRON A Injection and REBETOL Capsules are shown in the table below:

If your weight is	Take this many REBETOL Capsules each day:	Inject this amount of INTRON A under your skin (subcutaneously):
165 pounds or less	2 capsules in the AM 3 capsules in the PM	3 million international units (MIU) 3 times per week
More than 165 pounds	3 capsules in the AM 3 capsules in the PM	3 million international units (MIU) 3 times per week

Your doctor may recommend a lower dose of REBETOL or INTRON A if you have certain adverse events.

You can take your REBETOL with or without food, but it is best to take it the same way every day.

It is important to follow your dosing schedule and your doctor's instructions on how to take your medications. Take the medicine for as long as prescribed and do not exceed the recommended dosage. If you miss a dose of REBETOL, take the missed dose as soon as possible during the same day. If an entire day has gone by, check with your doctor about what to do. Do not double the next dose. If you miss a dose of INTRON A, take the missed dose as soon as possible during the same day or on the next day, and continue the dosing schedule provided to you by your doctor. If several days go by, check with your doctor about what to do. Do not double the next dose. Instructions on how to inject your INTRON A dose are provided later in this medication guide.

What should I avoid while taking combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

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- You should not inject yourself with any medicine that appears discolored or irregular.
- Tell your doctor about any other medications you are taking.
- Ask your doctor if there are other things you should avoid.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in this medication guide. Remember, this medicine is for you and must be used as prescribed by your doctor. Never give it to anyone else.

What are the possible side effects of combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

- **COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD. THEREFORE, BOTH YOU AND YOUR PARTNER MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. If you or your partner are a woman of childbearing age, you or your partner must have a negative pregnancy test immediately before beginning therapy, as well as a negative pregnancy test each month during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. If you or your partner become pregnant during therapy or during the 6 months after stopping therapy, immediately report the pregnancy to your doctor.**
- **REBETOL therapy causes a reduction in the number of red blood cells you have which can be dangerous, especially if you have heart or circulatory problems. It is very important that your doctor check your red blood cell count before starting therapy and at least two more times during the first four weeks of therapy. If needed your doctor will check your blood counts more often while you are receiving therapy. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE YOUR RED BLOOD CELL COUNT CHECKED MORE OFTEN IF YOU HAVE ANY HEART PROBLEMS OR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.**
- Most patients who take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy have “flu-like” symptoms that usually diminish after the first few weeks of therapy. These include headache, fatigue, muscle ache, and fever. You can minimize some of these “flu-like” symptoms by injecting your INTRON A at bedtime. Over-the-counter pain and fever reducers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, can be used to prevent or partially relieve the fever and headache.
- Some patients experience emotional or behavioral problems such as irritability (getting easily excited), and/or depression (feeling low, feeling bad about yourself, and/or feeling hopeless).
- **A few patients have very serious psychological problems including thoughts about killing themselves and have committed suicide. These side effects have been associated with interferon therapy alone and with combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy. In general, these events and behaviors stop after therapy is stopped. IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE THOUGHTS OR FEELINGS YOU SHOULD TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.**
- Some patients experience insomnia (not being able to sleep).
- Hair thinning is a common event which occurs in the later stages of treatment. Hair loss stops and hair growth returns after therapy is stopped.
- You may get a rash during therapy. Your doctor can recommend treatment to deal with the rash if this occurs.
- If you have psoriasis, it may get worse during treatment because of the effect of INTRON A on your immune system.
- **TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF YOU FEEL DEPRESSED, HAVE CHEST PAIN, OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH.**

- Like all medicines, combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy can cause a number of side effects. This summary does not include all possible side effects of combination therapy. Your doctor has been informed of other complaints reported during clinical trials. It is important to talk with your doctor about possible side effects. If you want to read more, ask your doctor or pharmacist to give you the professional labeling.

What should I know about the hepatitis C virus?

Hepatitis C is a viral disease that causes inflammation of the liver. It develops into a chronic continuing condition in a great majority of patients. Patients with chronic hepatitis C may develop cirrhosis, liver cancer, or possibly even liver failure. Liver failure due to hepatitis C is currently the leading cause of liver transplants in the United States. Combination therapy may reduce hepatitis C virus in your blood stream to levels that cannot be measured by laboratory tests. However, it is not yet proven if it will cure your disease or prevent the complications associated with infection.

How do I Inject INTRON A?

- DO NOT INJECT INTRON A UNTIL YOUR DOCTOR HAS THOROUGHLY TRAINED YOU IN THE PROPER TECHNIQUES.
- If you have any questions, contact your doctor prior to injecting INTRON A.
- If your injection is given by another individual, he or she should be instructed by the doctor on the use of sterile technique and how to avoid an accidental needle stick.

The INTRON A Injection multidose pen (INTRON A multidose pen) is a pre-filled multidose syringe containing six doses of INTRON A (interferon alfa-2b, recombinant). This multidose pen is specially designed to deliver six doses of 3 MIU of INTRON A. If necessary, it can also be used to deliver different doses (i.e. if your doctor wants you to increase or decrease your dose). The different doses that it can deliver are 1.5 MIU, 3 MIU, 4.5 MIU and 6 MIU. Six MIU is the maximum dose that this pen can give at one time.

Please note the following important points BEFORE using your INTRON A multidose pen:

- The INTRON A multidose pen should **ONLY** be used with the enclosed **Novofine*** needles. The use of other needles may result in the pen not working properly and/or the wrong dose of INTRON A solution delivered.
- **ALWAYS** discard needles and used pens carefully; **NEVER** discard the pen with a needle attached.
- Use the INTRON A multidose pen **ONLY** in accordance with these instructions. **DO NOT** allow the INTRON A multidose pen to be handled roughly or otherwise misused.
- **KEEP** out of reach of children.
- When not in use you should **STORE** the INTRON A Multidose Pen in the **REFRIGERATOR** at **2° to 8°C (36°-46°F)** (not too near the freezer compartment).
- **ALWAYS** check that INTRON A **IS CLEAR** in appearance prior to use. If it **DOES NOT** have a clear uniform appearance **DO NOT USE**. Please consult your doctor or pharmacist.

- ***ALWAYS** check the expiration date; **NEVER** use after the expiration date.*

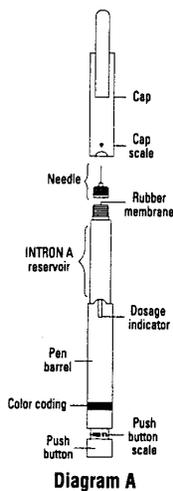
Description of your INTRON A multidose pen

Diagrams A and B show you all the different parts of the pen and the Novofine* needle. The most important parts to note are as follows:

- The **push button scale** tells you what dose has been set.
- The **color coding** strip and the **push button** are at the bottom of the pen as it is held cap up. (The six doses of 3 MIU multidose pen have a brown coding strip)
- The INTRON A multidose pen can only be fully capped when the **triangle** on the **cap scale** is aligned with the **dosage indicator** on the barrel.

INTRON A Pen

Diagram A



Novofine* Needle Assembly

Diagram B



HOW TO USE YOUR INTRON A Multidose Pen

*When you are ready to give your injection prepare your pen as follows. (NOTE: **Boldface print indicates ACTION STEPS**):*

1. **First check that you have the correct INTRON A Multidose Pen as prescribed by your doctor**, (i.e. the six doses of 3 MIU INTRON A multidose pen which have a **brown** push button and a **brown** color coding strip).
2. **Pull off the cap of the pen and disinfect the rubber membrane** (see Diagram C) **with one alcohol wipe**.

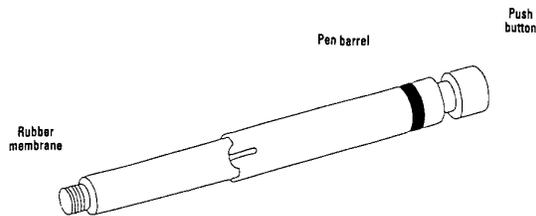


Diagram C

3. **Remove the protective tab from the Novofine* needle.** Note that the rear portion of the needle is revealed once the protective tab is removed (see Diagram D).

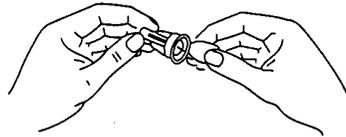


Diagram D

4. **Gently push the Novofine* needle onto the pen as shown in Diagram E.** (Notice that the rear portion of the needle described in Step 3 will pierce through the rubber membrane that you disinfected previously.) **Now screw the needle onto the INTRON A multidose pen securely by turning it in a clockwise direction** (see Diagram F).

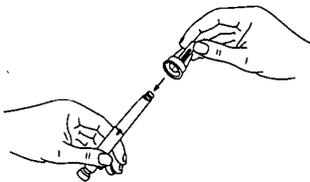


Diagram E

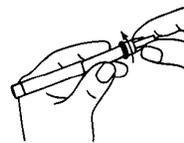


Diagram F

5. **First, pull off the outer needle cap** (Diagram G). **Then, pull off the inner needle cap carefully, bearing in mind that the needle will now be exposed.** (Diagram H). Keep the outer needle cap for later use.

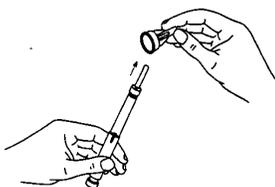


Diagram G

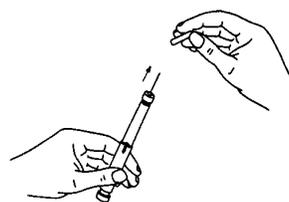


Diagram H

The pen is now ready to use. Since a small amount of air may collect in the needle and reservoir during storage, the next step is to remove any air bubbles.

6. **Hold the INTRON A multidose pen with the needle point upwards.**
7. **Tap the reservoir with your finger so that any air bubbles rise to the top of the reservoir, just below the needle (Diagram I).**

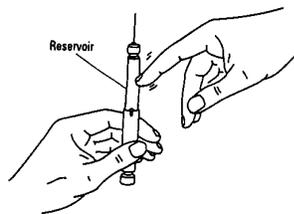


Diagram I

8. **Hold the pen by the barrel and turn the reservoir in the direction as indicated by the arrow in Diagram J (clockwise) until you feel it click.**

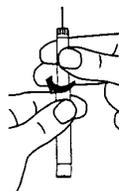


Diagram J

9. **Keeping the pen pointing upwards, press the push button up fully and see if a drop of INTRON A solution appears at the needle tip (notice the drop at the tip of needle in Diagram K).**

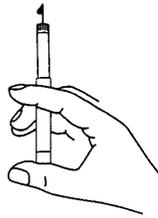


Diagram K

10. **If no drop appears then repeat Steps 7, 8, and 9 until a drop appears at the needle tip.**

Note: Some air may still remain in the pen, but this is not important as you have removed the air from the needle and the dose will be accurate.

11. **Replace the INTRON A multidose pen cap with the ‘triangle’ opposite the dosage indicator as seen in Diagram L.**

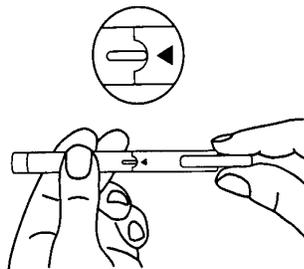


Diagram L

The pen is now ready to set the dose. For the next step hold the pen in the middle of the barrel. This will allow the push button to move freely, ensuring that the correct dose is set.

12. **To set the required dose, hold the pen horizontally by the barrel with one hand. With the other hand, turn the cap in a clockwise direction indicated by the arrow in Diagram M.**

You will observe the push button rising, indicating the dose set. To set a 3 MIU dose, turn the cap 2 full turns (10 clicks) = 3.0 MIU .

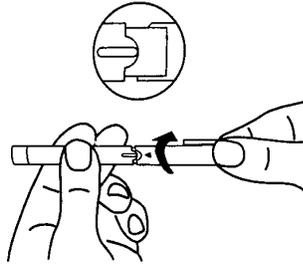


Diagram M

Note: If your doctor has prescribed a dose other than 3 MIU, the correct dose can be set by turning the cap as many times as indicated as follows:

- 1 full turn (5 clicks) = 1.5 MIU
- 3 full turns (15 clicks) = 4.5 MIU
- 4 full turns (20 clicks) = 6.0 MIU

The push button scale will show you the dose set (see diagram N). At that point check that you have the correct dose.

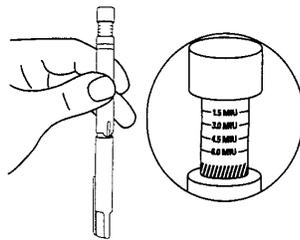


Diagram N

13. **After each complete turn make sure that the triangle is opposite the dosage indicator** (see Diagram O). If you have set a wrong dose, simply turn the cap back (counter-clockwise) as far as you can until the push button is fully home and start again. Once the correct dose is set, you are ready to give the injection.

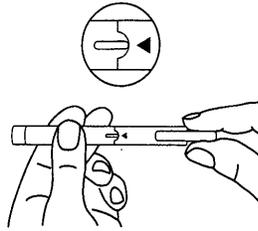


Diagram O

14. Remove the pen cap and insert the needle as you have been shown by your doctor or nurse. Then press the push button down fully (see Diagram P).

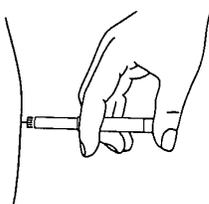


Diagram P

15. Leave the needle in place for a few seconds to allow the INTRON A Solution to distribute under the skin, then remove.
16. Carefully replace the *outer* needle cap using a scooping motion (See Diagram Q).

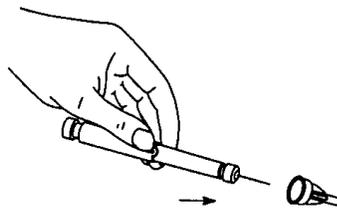


Diagram Q

17. **Completely unscrew the needle assembly using a counter-clockwise turning motion as show in Diagram R. Then carefully lift it off the pen and discard the capped needle (see Diagram S).**

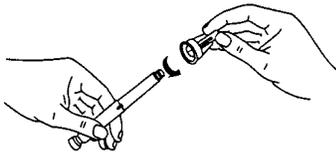


Diagram R

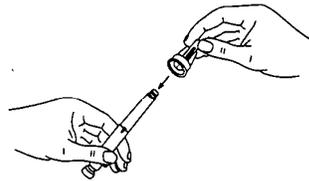


Diagram S

18. **Replace the pen cap with the triangle once again opposite the dosage indicator as shown in Diagram T.**

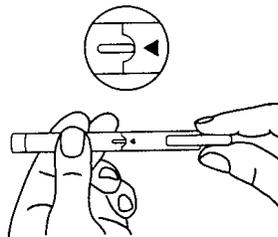


Diagram T

Instructional leaflet and video are available through your doctor.

How do I store my medication?

STORAGE OF REBETOL CAPSULES

REBETOL capsules should be stored in the refrigerator between 2° and 8°C (36° and 46°F) or at

room temperature 25°C (77°F). The capsules may be stored at temperatures between 25° and 30°C (77° and 86°F) for short periods of time.

STORAGE OF INTRON A INJECTION MULTIDOSE PEN

INTRON A Injection multidose pen should be stored in the refrigerator between 2° and 8°C (36° and 46°F), not in the freezer.

* Novofine is a registered trademark of Novo Nordisk.

Schering Corporation
Kenilworth, NJ 07033 USA

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GUIDE
(vial)

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Combination Therapy

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It is also unknown if combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy will prevent one infected person from infecting another person with hepatitis C.

Who should not take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

DO NOT USE these medicines if:

- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER ARE PREGNANT.**
- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER INTEND TO BECOME PREGNANT AT ANY TIME DURING TREATMENT OR DURING THE 6 MONTHS AFTER TREATMENT.**
- **YOU OR YOUR PARTNER BECOME PREGNANT DURING TREATMENT. COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD. Therefore, both you and your partner MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) DURING THERAPY AND FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER STOPPING THERAPY.**
- You are allergic to any of the ingredients in REBETOL Capsules or INTRON A Injection or to any alpha interferon.
- You have autoimmune hepatitis (hepatitis caused by cells in your body attacking each other).

If you have any of the following medical conditions or other serious medical problems, you should discuss these with your doctor before taking this medicine:

- High blood pressure, have had a heart attack, or other heart problems, because combination therapy may cause heart problems to become worse.
- Blood disorders; including anemia (low red blood cell count), thalassemia (Mediterranean anemia), and sickle-cell anemia, because combination therapy may further reduce the number of red blood cells you have. This may make you feel dizzy or weak and could worsen any heart problems you might have.
- Kidney problems.
- Liver problems (except hepatitis C infection).
- Nervous or mental problems (such as depression, anxiety, etc.), because the combination could make these problems worse.
- Body organ transplant and are taking medicine that keeps your body from rejecting your transplant (suppresses your immune system).
- Thyroid disease.
- Cancer.
- Infection with hepatitis B virus and/or human immunodeficiency virus (the virus that causes AIDS).
- Diabetes.
- Previously failed interferon therapy for hepatitis C.

How should I take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

Your doctor has determined the correct dose of REBETOL Capsules based on your weight. Your doctor may adjust your dose of REBETOL and/or INTRON A according to your response to these medicines. Routine blood tests will help your doctor to monitor your response to treatment. The recommended doses of INTRON A Injection and REBETOL Capsules are shown in the table below:

If your weight is:	Take this many REBETOL Capsules each day:	Inject this amount of INTRON A under your skin (subcutaneously):
165 pounds or less	2 capsules in the AM 3 capsules in the PM	3 million international units 3 times per week
More than 165 pounds	3 capsules in the AM 3 capsules in the PM	3 million international units 3 times per week

Your doctor may recommend a lower dose of REBETOL or INTRON A if you have certain adverse events.

You can take your REBETOL Capsules with or without food, but it is best to take it the same way every day.

It is important to follow your dosing schedule and your doctor's instructions on how to take your medications. Take the medicine for as long as prescribed and do not exceed the recommended dosage. If you miss a dose of REBETOL, take the missed dose as soon as possible during the same day. If an entire day has gone by, check with your doctor about what to do. Do not double the next dose. If you miss a dose of INTRON A, take the missed dose as soon as possible during the same day or on the next day, and continue the dosing schedule provided to you by your doctor. If several days go by, check with your doctor about what to do. Do not double the next dose. Instructions on how to inject your INTRON A dose are provided later in this medication guide.

What should I avoid while taking combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

- YOU OR YOUR PARTNER MUST NOT BECOME PREGNANT WHILE TAKING COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY AND FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER STOPPING THERAPY. COMBINATION REBETOL/ INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD. Therefore, both you and your partner MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. You or your partner must have a negative pregnancy test immediately before beginning therapy, as well as a negative pregnancy test each month during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. If you or your partner become pregnant during treatment or during the 6 months after treatment, immediately report the pregnancy to your doctor. You or your doctor should call (800) 727-7064.** Schering has established the (800) number to collect patient and/or partner pregnancy information for entry into a pregnancy registry database. This database is used to monitor the outcome of fetal exposure to assess the known risks of death and serious birth defects expected based on animal studies. You and/or your physician will be requested to provide follow-up information on the outcome of the pregnancy.

- You should not inject yourself with any medicine that appears discolored or irregular.
- Tell your doctor about any other medications you are taking.
- Ask your doctor if there are other things you should avoid.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in this medication guide. Remember, this medicine is for you and must be used as prescribed by your doctor. Never give it to anyone else.

What are the possible side effects of combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy?

- **COMBINATION REBETOL/INTRON A THERAPY COULD CAUSE DEATH, SERIOUS BIRTH DEFECTS, AND HARM TO YOUR UNBORN CHILD. THEREFORE, BOTH YOU AND YOUR PARTNER MUST USE EFFECTIVE CONTRACEPTION (two reliable methods) during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. If you or your partner are a woman of childbearing age, you or your partner must have a negative pregnancy test immediately before beginning therapy, as well as a negative pregnancy test each month during therapy and for 6 months after stopping therapy. If you or your partner become pregnant during therapy or during the 6 months after stopping therapy, immediately report the pregnancy to your doctor.**
- **REBETOL therapy causes a reduction in the number of red blood cells you have which can be dangerous, especially if you have heart or circulatory problems. It is very important that your doctor check your red blood cell count before starting therapy and at least two more times during the first four weeks of therapy. If needed your doctor will check your blood counts more often while you are receiving therapy. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE YOUR RED BLOOD CELL COUNT CHECKED MORE OFTEN IF YOU HAVE ANY HEART PROBLEMS OR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.**
- Most patients who take combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy have “flu-like” symptoms that usually diminish after the first few weeks of therapy. These include headache, fatigue, muscle ache, and fever. You can minimize some of these “flu-like” symptoms by injecting your INTRON A at bedtime. Over-the-counter pain and fever reducers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, can be used to prevent or partially relieve the fever and headache.
- Some patients experience emotional or behavioral problems such as irritability (getting easily excited), and/or depression (feeling low, feeling bad about yourself, and/or feeling hopeless).
- **A few patients have very serious psychological problems including thoughts about killing themselves and have committed suicide. These side effects have been associated with interferon therapy alone and with combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy. In general, these events and behaviors stop after therapy is stopped. IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE THOUGHTS OR FEELINGS YOU SHOULD TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.**
- Some patients experience insomnia (not being able to sleep).
- Hair thinning is a common event which occurs in the later stages of treatment. Hair loss stops and hair growth returns after therapy is stopped.
- You may get a rash during therapy. Your doctor can recommend treatment to deal with the rash if this occurs.
- If you have psoriasis, it may get worse during treatment because of the effect of INTRON A on

your immune system.

- TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF YOU FEEL DEPRESSED, HAVE CHEST PAIN, OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH.
- Like all medicines, combination REBETOL/INTRON A therapy can cause a number of side effects. This summary does not include all possible side effects of combination therapy. Your doctor has been informed of other complaints reported during clinical trials. It is important to talk with your doctor about possible side effects. If you want to read more, ask your doctor or pharmacist to give you the professional labeling.

What should I know about the hepatitis C virus?

Hepatitis C is a viral disease that causes inflammation of the liver. It develops into a chronic continuing condition in a great majority of patients. Patients with chronic hepatitis C may develop cirrhosis, liver cancer, or possibly even liver failure. Liver failure due to hepatitis C is currently the leading cause of liver transplants in the United States. Combination therapy may reduce hepatitis C virus in your blood stream to levels that cannot be measured by laboratory tests. However, it is not yet proven if it will cure your disease or prevent the complications associated with infection.

How do I Inject INTRON A?

- DO NOT INJECT INTRON A UNTIL YOUR DOCTOR HAS THOROUGHLY TRAINED YOU IN THE PROPER TECHNIQUES.
- If you have any questions, contact your doctor prior to injecting INTRON A.
- Use the sterile technique as instructed by your doctor. Destroy disposable syringes and needles after each use and discard appropriately according to directions provided by your doctor or nurse.
- If your injection is given by another individual, he or she should be instructed by the doctor on the use of sterile technique and how to avoid an accidental needle stick.

PREPARING THE INTRON A DOSE

IMPORTANT: Before each use, the liquid in the vial should be clear, colorless to light yellow, and without particles. Do not use if you see particles or the color is not correct; call your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

1. Wash your hands thoroughly and remove the protective plastic cap from the top of the INTRON A vial.
2. Clean the rubber stopper on the top of the INTRON A vial with an alcohol swab.
3. Remove the protective cap from the syringe needle and fill with air by pulling the plunger to the level that represents your dose as indicated by your doctor (**Figure A**).

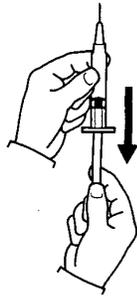


Figure A

Hold the INTRON A vial upright without touching the cleaned top of the vial with your hands (**Figure B**).

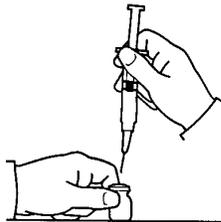


Figure B

Insert the needle into the vial containing the INTRON A solution and inject the air into the vial (**Figure C**).

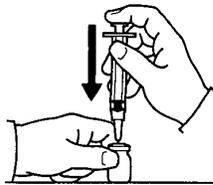


Figure C

4. Turn vial and syringe upside down in one hand. Be sure tip of needle is in the INTRON A solution. Your other hand will be free to move the plunger. Pull back on plunger slowly to draw the correct dose as prescribed by your doctor into syringe (**Figure D**).

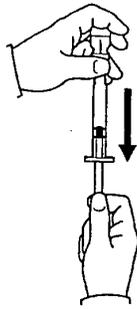


Figure D

5. Remove needle from vial (**Figure E**) and check for air bubbles in the syringe. If you see any bubbles, tap the syringe gently and with the needle pointing up, push the plunger slowly until the bubbles disappear.

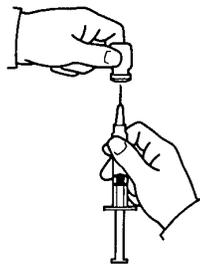


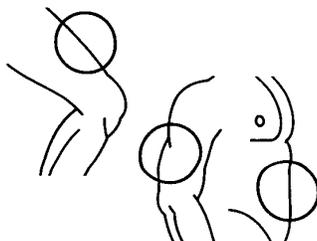
Figure E

6. Replace the needle cap. **If the solution is cold, warm syringe between hands.** Lay syringe down on a flat surface so that needle does not touch anything.

FOR SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION

1. Selecting the Site for Injection

- The best sites for injection are tissues with a layer of fat between skin and muscle
 - thigh
 - outer surface of the upper arm
 - abdomen, except the navel or waistline.
- If you are exceptionally thin, use only the thigh or outer surface of the arm for injection.
- Do not inject INTRON A solution in the same place repeatedly - change your injection site in a regular pattern.



- Cleanse the skin with an alcohol swab where the injection is to be made. Wait for area to dry. Remove cap from needle. With one hand, pinch a 2-inch fold of loose skin.
- With your other hand pick up syringe, and hold it as you would a pencil. Insert needle approximately 1/4 inch into the pinched skin at an angle of 45° to 90°.



After the needle is in, remove hand used to pinch skin and use it to hold syringe barrel. Pull back the plunger very slightly with one hand. If blood comes into the syringe, the needle has entered a blood vessel. Do not inject. Withdraw and discard needle and syringe. Prepare a new syringe and inject at a new site. (Follow steps 2 and 3.)

- If blood does not appear in the syringe, push plunger all the way down gently.
- Hold alcohol swab near the needle and pull needle straight out of skin. Press alcohol swab over injection site for several seconds. Do not massage injection site. If there is bleeding, cover with an adhesive bandage.
- Use disposable syringe only once to ensure sterility of syringe and needle. Dispose of syringe and needle as directed.

You should be instructed on the proper handling and disposal of all syringes and needles, and the importance of not reusing any syringes or needles.

The container for the disposal of used needles and syringes should be supplied to you. The full container should be disposed of according to directions provided by your doctor or nurse.

- After 2 hours, check injection site for signs of inflammation, such as redness, swelling, or tenderness; if there are any, contact your doctor or nurse.

How do I store my medication?

STORAGE OF REBETOL CAPSULES

REBETOL Capsules should be stored in the refrigerator between 2° and 8°C (36° and 46°F) or at room temperature 25°C (77°F). The capsules may be stored at temperatures between 25° and 30°C (77° and 86°F) for short periods of time.

STORAGE OF INTRON A INJECTION

INTRON A Injection should be stored in the refrigerator between 2° and 8°C (36° and 46°F), not

in the freezer.

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