

Hydroxyurea

What is Hydroxyurea?

- It is a medicine for people with sickle cell disease.
- This medicine helps your body make more Hemoglobin F.
- Hemoglobin F helps to keep your red blood cells soft and squishy.
- You may sometimes see it called Hydrea, Droxia, or HU.

What does Hydroxyurea do?

It is not a cure for sickle cell disease. But, it can help you live a longer and better life. It can:

- Reduce how often you have pain from sickle cell.
- Reduce how often you need blood transfusions.
- Help you stay out of the hospital.
- Protect your organs from damage from sickle cell.

Who should take Hydroxyurea?

If you have sickle cell disease, ask your doctor about this medicine. Even if you don't feel bad from your sickle cell, it might be right for you. It can protect your organs from damage that you don't even feel.

Who should NOT take Hydroxyurea?

- Very young babies.
- People who are pregnant.
- Men or women who are trying to have a baby with their partner.

What else do I need to know?

- You must take hydroxyurea every day for it to work.
- It may take as long as 3 to 6 months to see results. But, you may see results much sooner.
- You will need to have your blood drawn once a month for awhile. This will help the doctor decide how much hydroxyurea you should be taking.
- Once you start taking it, you should not stop without talking to your sickle cell doctor.
- It is safe to take it for a long time. Many people with sickle cell have taken it safely for over 20 years.

I want to take Hydroxyurea.

Talk to your sickle cell doctor. Make sure you know the risks and the benefits of this medicine. Make a list of questions to ask your doctor. Some questions may be:

- What are the side effects?
- How long do I have to keep taking this medicine?
- What do I do if I have an allergic reaction to this medicine?
- What do I do if I don't think this medicine is helping me?
- What do I do if I want to have a baby while I am taking this?

