

SUMMARY OF MEDICATIONS FREQUENTLY USED IN THE TREATMENT OF PBC

NAME	RECOMMENDED DOSE	COMMENTS
To slow down the rate of progression		
Ursodeoxycholic acid	13-15mg/kg/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally very well tolerated • Rarely, loose stool or indigestion.
For treatment of itch		
Cholestyramine	4 to 8 grams once or twice a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpalatable but otherwise generally well tolerated • Occasionally bloating, constipation or diarrhoea • Should be taken one hour after and 4 hours before other medications
Rifampicin	150mg/day or 150mg twice daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially requires frequent close monitoring of blood tests • Causes orange urine and secretions, for example tears • May cause failure of the oral contraceptive pill • May reduce the effect of certain antidepressants
Naltrexone	Up to 50mg/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some patients experience a severe opioid-withdrawal type reaction on starting treatment. Initiation of treatment therefore requires very careful supervision
Sertraline	75 mg/day to 100mg/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea, diarrhea, insomnia

NAME	RECOMMENDED DOSE	COMMENTS
To treat osteoporosis		
Bisphosphonates	Depends on the preparation, e.g., alendronate 70mg per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May cause indigestion • Tablet preparations should be taken on an empty stomach • Remain standing for at least 30 minutes after taking a bisphosphonate tablet • Tablet preparations should not be taken at the same time as calcium supplements • It may be best for patients with varices to avoid tablet preparations
To treat portal hypertension		
Propranolol	Dose required to achieve resting pulse of 60 beats per minute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not be taken by patients with asthma, COPD, glaucoma or heart-block (discuss this with the doctor) • May worsen fatigue
To treat high cholesterol		
Cholestyramine	4 to 8 grams once or twice a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above
HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors ('statins')	Depends on the preparation, e.g., simvastatin 10-40 mg once daily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LFT should be monitored for the first few weeks after starting treatment • Muscle aches and pains (NB. these should be reported to the doctor)