

Summary of Product Characteristics

1. NAME OF THE MEDICINAL PRODUCT

Eltroxin 50 microgram Tablets

2. QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each tablet contains 50 micrograms anhydrous Levothyroxine sodium.

Excipients: Also contains lactose monohydrate 31.879mg (50 microgram tablets)

For a full list of excipients, see section 6.1

3. PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

Tablet.

Each white tablet is scored on one side and is engraved with Eltroxin 50 on the other side.

The scoreline is to allow breaking for ease of swallowing.

4. CLINICAL PARTICULARS

4.1 Therapeutic indications

Recommended clinical indications: Control of hypothyroidism, congenital hypothyroidism and juvenile myxoedema.

4.2 Posology and method of administration

Adults: Initially 50 to 100 micrograms daily, preferably taken before breakfast. Adjust at three to four week intervals by 50 micrograms until normal metabolism is steadily maintained: this may require doses of 100 to 200 micrograms daily.

For patients over 50 years, it is not advisable to exceed 50 micrograms daily initially and where there is cardiac disease, 25 micrograms daily or 50 micrograms on alternate days is more suitable initially. In this condition the daily dose may be increased by 25 micrograms at intervals of perhaps 4 weeks.

For patients younger than 50 years, and in the absence of heart disease, a serum thyroxine (T4) level of 70 to 160 nanomols per litre, or a serum thyrotrophin level of less than 5 milli-units per litre should be targeted.

For patients aged over 50 years, with or without cardiac disease, clinical response is probably a more acceptable criteria of dosage rather than serum levels.

A pre-therapy ECG is valuable because ECG changes due to hypothyroidism may be confused with ECG evidence of cardiac ischaemia. If too rapid an increase in metabolism is produced (causing diarrhoea, nervousness, rapid pulse, insomnia, tremors, and sometimes anginal pain where there is latent cardiac ischaemia.) dosage must be reduced, or withheld, for a day or two, and then re-started at a lower dose level.

Elderly: As for patients aged over 50 years.

Children: The largest dose consistent with freedom from toxic effects should be given. The dosage is guided by clinical response, growth assessment and appropriate thyroid function tests. Clinically, normal pulse rate and absence of diarrhoea or constipation are the most useful indicators.

Thyrotrophin levels may remain elevated during the first year of life in children with neonatal hypothyroidism due to re-setting of the hypothalamic-pituitary axis.

For infants with congenital hypothyroidism a suitable starting dose is 25 micrograms daily, with increments of 25 micrograms every two to four weeks until mild toxic symptoms appear. Dosage is then slightly reduced. The same applies to juvenile myxoedema, except that the starting dose for children older than one year may be 2.5 to 5 micrograms/kg/day.

Method of administration: Oral.

4.3 Contraindications

Thyrotoxicosis. Hypersensitivity to any components of Eltroxin tablets.

4.4 Special warnings and special precautions for use

Levothyroxine should be introduced very gradually in elderly patients and those with long standing hypothyroidism to avoid any sudden increase in metabolic demands.

Patient with panhypopituitarism or other causes predisposing to adrenal insufficiency may react to levothyroxine treatment, and it is advisable to start corticosteroid therapy before giving levothyroxine to such patients.

Special care is needed for the elderly and for patients with symptoms of myocardial insufficiency, or ECG evidence of myocardial infarction.

Levothyroxine sodium should be used with caution in patients with cardiovascular disorders, including angina, coronary artery disease, patients with ECG evidence of myocardial insufficiency or infarction, hypertension, and in the elderly who have a greater likelihood of occult cardiac disease. An ECG before starting treatment with levothyroxine is advised, as changes induced by hypothyroidism may be confused with evidence of ischaemia.

Thyroid replacement therapy may cause an increase in dosage requirements of insulin or other anti-diabetic therapy. Care is needed for patients with diabetes mellitus and diabetes insipidus. See note above regarding withdrawal of treatment.

Levothyroxine should be introduced very gradually in elderly patients and those with long standing hypothyroidism to avoid any sudden increase in metabolic demands.

Care is required when levothyroxine is administered to patients with known history of epilepsy. Seizures have been reported rarely in association with the initiation of levothyroxin sodium therapy, and may be related to the effect of thyroid hormone on seizure threshold.

Patients with rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption should not take this medicine.

Subclinical hyperthyroidism may be associated with bone loss. To minimise the risk of osteoporosis, dosage of levothyroxine sodium should be titrated to the lowest possible effective level.

Parents of children receiving thyroid agent should be advised that partial loss of hair may occur during the first few months of therapy, but this effect is usually transient and subsequent regrowth usually occurs.

4.5 Interactions with other medicaments and other forms of interaction

Anticoagulants: Levothyroxine increases the effect of anticoagulants and it may be necessary to reduce the anticoagulation dosage if excessive. , hypoprothrombinaemia and bleeding are to be avoided Phenytoin levels may be increased by levothyroxine.

Anti-convulsants, such as carbamazepine and phenytoin, enhance the metabolism of thyroid hormones.

Initiation or discontinuation of anti-convulsant therapy may alter levothyroxine dosage requirements.

Blood sugar levels are raised and dosage of antidiabetic agents may require adjustment.

Tricyclic anti-depressants response may be accelerated because levothyroxine increases sensitivity to catecholamines.

Concomitant administration with tricyclic antidepressants may precipitate cardiac arrhythmias.

The effects of sympathomimetic agents (e.g. adrenaline(epinephrine) are enhanced.

If levothyroxine therapy is initiated in digitalised patients, the dose of digitalis may require adjustment. Hyperthyroid patients may need their digoxin dosage

gradually increased as treatment proceeds because initially patients are relatively sensitive to digoxin.

Other drugs may affect thyroid function tests and this must be considered when monitoring a patient on levothyroxine therapy.

Absorption of levothyroxine possibly reduced by cimetidine, antacids, calcium salts, oral iron, polystyrene sulphonate resins, sucralfate, colestipol and soy proteins (including soya based infant formula).

Amiodarone may affect thyroid function tests and this must be considered when monitoring a patient on levothyroxine therapy

False low plasma concentrations have been observed with concurrent anti inflammatory treatment such as phenylbutazone or acetylsalicylic acid and levothyroxine therapy

Metabolism of levothyroxine (thyroxine) accelerated by rifampicin, barbiturates, primidone and oestrogens.(may increase requirement for levothyroxine(thyroxine) in hypothyroidism)

Imatinib: plasma concentration of levothyroxine (thyroxine) possibly reduced by imatinib.

Propranolol: Levothyroxine(thyroxine) accelerates metabolism of propranolol.

Oestrogen, oestrogen containing products and oral contraceptives may increase the requirement of thyroid therapy dosage. Conversely, androgens and corticosteroids may decrease serum concentrations of levothyroxine binding globulins.

Isolated reports of marked hypertension and tachycardia has been reported with concurrent ketamine administration.

Lovastatin has been reported to cause one case each of hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism in two patients taking levothyroxine.

4.6 Pregnancy and lactation

The safety of levothyroxine treatment during pregnancy is not known, but any possible risk of foetal abnormalities should be weighed against the risk to the foetus of untreated hypothyroidism.

Levothyroxine is excreted in breast milk in low concentrations, and it is contentious whether this can interfere with neonatal screening.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

None known.

4.8 Undesirable effects

Side-effects are usually indicative of excessive dosage and usually disappear on reduction of dosage or withdrawal of treatment for a few days.

Such effects include:

Immune System disorders: Hypersensitivity reactions including rash, pruritus, oedema also reported.

Metabolic: fever, heat intolerance.

Nervous system disorders: tremors, restlessness, excitability, insomnia, headache, flushing, sweating.

Cardiac disorders: anginal pain, cardiac arrhythmias, palpitations, tachycardia.

Gastrointestinal disorders: diarrhoea, vomiting

Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders: cramps in skeletal muscles, muscular weakness.

Other symptoms: Transient hair loss in children Thyroid crisis have occasionally been reported following massive or chronic intoxication and cardiac arrhythmias, heart failure, coma and death have occurred.

4.9 Overdose

Symptoms of mild to moderate overdose: fever, angina, tachycardia, arrhythmias, muscle cramps, headache, restlessness, flushing, sweating, diarrhoea. Reduction of dose or withdrawal of therapy reverses mild overdose effects.

Symptoms of severe overdose: this may resemble thyroid crisis with collapse and coma.

Signs and symptoms of hyperthyroidism may be delayed for up to 5 days due to the gradual peripheral conversion of levothyroxine to triiodothyronine. Overdosage following recent ingestion of tablets can be treated using gastric lavage.

Treatment:

Treatment is symptomatic. Tachycardia may be controlled in an adult by 40mg doses of propranolol given every 6 hours. Other symptoms may be controlled by Diazepam and/or chlorpromazine as appropriate.

Antithyroid drugs such as propylthiouracil and lithium are unlikely to be of benefit to prevent thyrotoxic crisis due to delayed absorption/onset of action.

5. PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Eltroxin is a tablet containing the hydrated form of levothyroxine sodium which is used for the treatment of hypothyroidism.

The thyroid gland is dependent upon 2 active principles for its main hormone activity these are levothyroxine (tetraiodothyronine) and Tri-iodothyronine (See Goodman and Gilman, 1985). These closely related iodine containing amino acids are incorporated into the glycoprotein thyroglobulin.

The chief action of these hormones is to increase the rate of cell metabolism. Levothyroxine is deiodinated in peripheral tissues to form Tri-Iodothyronine which is thought to be the active tissue form of thyroid hormone. Tri-Iodothyronine is certainly more rapid acting and has a shorter duration of action than levothyroxine.

5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

Levothyroxine sodium is incompletely and variably absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract. It is almost completely bound to plasma proteins and has a half-life in the circulation of about a week in healthy subjects, but longer during pregnancy in patients with myxoedema.

A large portion of the levothyroxine leaving the circulation is taken up by the liver. Part of a dose of levothyroxine is metabolised to triiodothyronine.

Levothyroxine is excreted in the urine as free drug, deiodinated metabolites and conjugates. Some levothyroxine is excreted in the faeces. There is limited placental transfer of levothyroxine.

5.3 Preclinical safety data

No further data of relevance.

6. PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS

6.1 List of excipients

Sodium Citrate
Lactose
Maize starch
Powdered acacia
Magnesium Stearate

6.2 Incompatibilities

Not applicable.

6.3 Shelf life

36 months for containers
18 months for blisters

6.4 Special precautions for storage

Tablet containers: Do not store above 25 ° C. Keep container in the outer carton in order to protect from light.

Blisters: Do not store above 25 ° C. Store in the original package in order to protect from light.

6.5 Nature and contents of container

Polypropylene container with tamper-evident low density polyethylene lid, containing 100 and 1000 Eltroxin 50mcg tablets. Also 28, 56 and 112 tablets in PVC/PVDC/AL blister pack sizes.

6.6 Special precautions for disposal of a used medicinal product or waste materials derived from such medicinal product and other handling of the product

None

7. MARKETING AUTHORIZATION HOLDER

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Trading as Goldshield Pharmaceuticals.

8. MARKETING AUTHORIZATION NUMBER

PA 701/1/1

9. DATE OF FIRST AUTHORIZATION/RENEWAL OF AUTHORIZATION

September 1995

10. DATE OF (PARTIAL) REVISION OF THE TEXT

November 2010