Cromolyn (Mast Cell Stabilizers)

Cromolyn sodium (Intal) or cromoglicic acid is a medication that prevents the breakdown of mast cells. By preventing their breakdown, this medication prevents the release of inflammatory agents like histamine from entering the tissue. This medication is now often given second line in asthma prophylaxis, because it is required to be given 4 times per day on a fixed schedule to be effective.



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Mechanism

Mast Cell Stabilizer
Mast Sail Stabilized
This medication stabilizes mast cells. Mast cells break down as part of the inflammatory reaction and release histamine, a powerful vasodilator. These medications prevent mast cells from breaking down and releasing their contents.

Indications

Asthma Prophylaxis
Asthma-inhaler with Purple-axes
This medication is indicated only for the prevention of asthma attacks, as it prevents the breakdown of mast cells. It has no indication for treatment of an acute asthma attack.

Bronchial Inflammation
Broccoli in Flames
Cromolyn is used to prevent exercise-induced bronchospasm by working as an antiinflammatory. It should be administered approximately 15 minutes prior to exercise.

Allergic Rhinitis
Allergy-alligator with Runny-nose
Cromolyn is indicated as a nasal spray in some countries for the treatment of allergic rhinitis caused by irritants. It prevents the body from initiating an inflammatory reaction.

Side Effects

Cough
Coughing Coffee-pot
Patients may experience a cough as a side effect of the medication, because it increases the viscosity of mucus secretions.

Bronchospasm
Broccoli-spaceship
In very rare instances, patients have a paradoxical bronchospasm when taking this medication.

Consideration

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Fixed Schedule Administration

Fixed-clock Administered

Because this medication is used to prevent inflammatory responses like asthma, it must be maintained at a constant therapeutic level. This medication must be given on a fixed schedule and is administered via nebulizer or a metered dose inhaler (MDI). Because of administration 4 times daily, other medications are now preferred for use in asthma prophylaxis.

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