PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

SCHEDULING STATUS: **S4**

HYDREA 500 mg CAPSULES

Hydroxyurea

HYDREA contains sugar (lactose monohydrate) 42,2 mg per capsule

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking HYDREA

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have further questions, please ask your doctor, pharmacist, nurse or other health care provider.
- HYDREA has been prescribed for you personally and you should not share your medicine with other people. It may harm them, even if their symptoms are the same as yours.

What is in this leaflet

1. What HYDREA is and what it is used for

Each HYDREA capsule contains 500 mg hydroxyurea.

HYDREA (hydroxyurea) is a prescription medicine intended for use in the treatment of a type of blood

cancer (chronic myeloid leukaemia) and skin cancer (squamous cell carcinoma) of the head and neck (excluding the lip).

2. What you need to know before you take HYDREA

Do not take HYDREA:

- If you are hypersensitive (allergic) to hydroxyurea or any of the other ingredients of HYDREA (listed in section 6).
- If you have bone marrow depression, i.e. leukopenia, thrombocytopenia or severe anaemia.
- If you are taking anti-HIV medicine such as didanosine or stavudine. Tell your doctor if you are taking these anti-HIV medicines.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding (see **Pregnancy and breastfeeding and fertility).**

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor if you are using a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) to test your blood glucose. Hydroxyurea (i.e., HYDREA) may affect your sensor glucose results and may lead to low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia). Talk to the healthcare provider that prescribed your CGM about whether it is safe to use while you are taking HYDREA.

If haemolytic anaemia (disorder in which red blood cells are destroyed faster than they can be made) is detected when the blood tests are checked, your doctor will stop treatment with HYDREA.

Take special care with HYDREA:

- If you have fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers, and unexpected bleeding (signs of bone marrow depression).
- If you have previously received irradiation or cytotoxic therapy. Tell your doctor if you are receiving these therapies.

- If you are anaemic (low blood count). Severe anaemia must be corrected with whole blood replacement before initiating therapy with HYDREA
- If you have any kidney dysfunction.
- If you have numbness or weakness of the arms and legs (signs of peripheral neuropathy).
- If you have signs and symptoms of pancreatitis (pain and tenderness of the abdomen, abdominal distention and vomiting) and hepatotoxicity (toxicity of the liver).
- If you have any vasculitic ulcerations (inflammation of the blood vessels in the skin).
- If you are on interferon therapy.
- If you need to take any live vaccinations. It should be avoided during your treatment with HYDREA and for at least 6 months after your treatment has finished. Vaccination with a live vaccine may result in severe infection. Your antibody response to vaccines may be decreased
- If you develop fever, cough, difficulty in breathing or other lung or breathing symptoms.

Children and adolescents

Paediatric Use: Safety and effectiveness in children have not been established.

Pain or discomfort from inflammation of the mucous membranes at the irradiated site (mucositis) is usually treated with topical anaesthetics and orally administered analgesics, (pain medicines). Nausea, vomiting, and anorexia, resulting from combined therapy may usually be controlled by interruption of HYDREA administration.

If any of the above effects affects you, please inform your doctor immediately.

Elderly patients may be more sensitive to the effects of HYDREA and may require a lower dose regimen.

It is very important to maintain an adequate fluid intake.

Tell your doctor if you are taking HYDREA and are having blood tests done to test for urea, uric acid or lactic acid, as HYDREA may influence the blood test results.

Other medicines and HYDREA

Always tell your health care provider if you are taking any other medicine. (This includes all complementary or traditional medicines.)

Please tell your doctor if you are to be given HYDREA, and you are:

- using medicines for gout, as a dosage adjustment may be required
- using cytarabine, as there may be an increase in cytotoxic activity in HYDREA- treated cells
- using antiretroviral therapy, as this may cause very serious problems to your liver
- getting radiotherapy or cytotoxic therapy
- on interferon therapy.
- given some vaccines, if you recently had a vaccination or are planning to have one, tell your doctor.

HYDREA with food and drink and alcohol

You should check with your doctor before drinking alcohol to find out if it is advisable for you.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding and fertility

Pregnancy:

You should not take HYDREA if you are pregnant (see Do not take HYDREA). If you are a female capable of becoming pregnant you should use effective contraception during your treatment with HYDREA and for ≥ 6 months after stopping HYDREA.

If you are a male with a female partner capable of becoming pregnant, you should use effective contraception during your treatment with HYDREA and for 1 year after stopping HYDREA.

Breastfeeding:

Mothers breastfeeding their infants should not take HYDREA. If you are taking HYDREA you should not

breastfeed your baby.

Fertility:

For male patients only, this medicine can affect the production of sperm so you might want to discuss the possibility of conservation (by storage of sperm) with your doctor.

Male patients should use effective contraception measures during and at least 1 year after treatment with HYDREA.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, please consult your doctor, pharmacist or other health care provider for advice before taking this medicine.

Driving and using machines

HYDREA may cause drowsiness and other nervous system effects. Do not drive or use machinery if you experience these side effects.

It is not always possible to predict to what extent HYDREA may interfere with the daily activities of a patient. Patients should ensure that they do not engage in the following activities (e.g driving, riding, flying, sailing, operating machines/equipment) until they are aware of the measure to which HYDREA affects them.

HYDREA contains sugar (lactose monohydrate):

HYDREA contains lactose. If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to some sugars, contact your doctor before taking HYDREA.

3. How to take HYDREA

Do not share medicines prescribed for you with any other person.

Always take HYDREA exactly as your doctor or pharmacist has told you Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

The usual dose is:

All HYDREA dosage regimens are based on the patient's actual or ideal weight, whichever is less.

Your doctor will calculate the dosage of HYDREA that you should be taking based on your weight.

Depending on your age (elderly patients) and your response to treatment and any side effects that you may experience, your doctor may adjust your dose of HYDREA upward or downward or may temporarily discontinue HYDREA.

Handling HYDREA:

Swallow HYDREA capsules whole with water. If you prefer, or are unable to swallow capsules, empty the contents of the capsules into a glass of water and take immediately.

Some particles in the capsule may not dissolve and float on the surface. If you take HYDREA by emptying the contents of the capsule into water, please beware that this is a potent medicine and must be handled with care.

As far as possible avoid the powder coming into contact with the skin and mucous membranes (lining of the mouth, nose airways), as well as avoid inhaling the powder when opening the capsules. People who are not taking HYDREA should not be exposed to it. To decrease the risk of skin exposure, wear disposable gloves when handling HYDREA or bottles containing HYDREA and wash your hands before and after contact with the bottle or capsules (the same applies to anyone else that may handle your medicine). If the powder is spilled, it should be immediately wiped up with a damp disposable towel and discarded in a closed container, such as a plastic bag, as should the empty capsules. HYDREA should be kept away from children and pets.

Your doctor will tell you how long your treatment with HYDREA will last. Do not stop treatment early. If you have the impression that the effect of HYDREA is too strong or too weak, tell your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take more HYDREA than you should

Some of the symptoms of overdosage include soreness, violet erythema, swelling on palms and foot soles followed by scaling of hands and feet and discolouration of skin.

In the event of overdosage, consult your doctor or pharmacist. If neither is available, contact your nearest hospital or poison centre.

If you forget to take HYDREA

If you miss a dose of HYDREA, take your next scheduled dose at its regular time.

Do not take a double dose to make up for forgotten individual dose. Call your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what to do.

4. Possible side effects

HYDREA can have side effects.

Not all side effects reported for HYDREA are included in this leaflet. Should your general health worsen or if you experience any untoward effects while taking HYDREA, please consult your health care provider for advice.

If any of the following happens, stop taking HYDREA and tell your doctor immediately or go to the casualty department at your nearest hospital:

- swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, face, lips and mouth or throat, which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing,
- redness of the skin (rash), skin ulcerations or itching,
- fainting.

These are all very serious side effects. If you have them, you may have had a serious reaction to HYDREA. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

Tell your doctor immediately or go to the casualty department at your nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:

Side effect reported frequently:

- yellowing of the skin and eyes, also called jaundice,
- inflammation of the pancreas usually characterised by severe upper stomach pain, often with nausea and vomiting (pancreatitis),
- liver damage (hepatotoxicity) usually characterised by flu-like symptoms, including tiredness, loss of appetite, fever, aching, and feeling sick/being sick, pressure or pain below the right ribs and might also include yellowing of the skin or eyes
- unexplained difficulty breathing (shortness of breath),
- signs of recurrent infections such as fever,
- kidney problems like less urine than is normal for you (instances of painful or difficult urination),
- skin cancer,
- low blood counts and blood disorders (reduction in the white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets),
- systemic lupus erythematosus (an autoimmune disease where the immune system of your body mistakenly attacks healthy tissue. It can affect the skin, joints, kidneys, brain or other organs)
- cutaneous lupus erythematosus (symptoms can include butterfly rash over the cheeks, rash on arms, sometimes forming large plaques and spreading widely, a rash on all recently sun-exposed skin, inflammation of the lips and mouth ulcers, blisters and erosions)

Side effects reported less frequently:

- tissue death (gangrene) which is characterised by darkening of the skin, severe pain, numbness and tingling of the hands or feet, and a foul discharge.

Side effects reported with unknown frequency:

- fever, cough or breathing problems, this could be a sign of serious lung disease
- a high fever (> 39 °C) with stomach, lung, muscle, liver, skin and heart problems within 6 weeks of

taking HYDREA.

These are all serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following:

The following side effects have been reported frequently

- sores on the lips or mouth (inflammation of the mucous membranes in the mouth),
- loss of appetite for food,
- nausea (feeling sick),
- vomiting,
- diarrhoea,
- constipation,
- abdominal cramps or stomach pains,
- hair loss,
- headache,
- dizziness,
- drowsiness,
- disorientation,
- hallucinations,
- convulsion,
- chills,
- weakness, tiredness or loss of energy,
- problems with the flow of the bile (cholestasis), the bile which is made by the liver to aid in digestion of food may not flow properly. A build-up of bile can cause itchiness, yellow skin, very dark urine and very pale stools,
- inflammation of the liver (hepatitis) which cause flu-like symptoms, including tiredness, loss of appetite,

fever, aching, and feeling sick/being sick, pressure or pain below the right ribs and might also include yellowing of the skin or eyes.

- absence or low amount of sperm in the semen (azoospermia or oligospermia)

The following side effects have been reported less frequently

- tumour lysis syndrome (complications of substances released from treated cancer cells entering the blood)

The following side effects have been reported with unknown frequency

- change in the colour of the nails,
- haemolytic anaemia (your body doesn't have enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen around, which can make you feel tired and weak), blood tests may likely be done.

Combined HYDREA and irradiation therapy:

Nearly all patients receiving an adequate course of combined HYDREA and irradiation therapy will develop leukopenia (low white blood cell count). HYDREA may potentiate (increase) some adverse reactions usually seen with radiation alone, such as gastric distress and mucositis. (See **Take special care with HYDREA.**)

If you notice any side effects not mentioned in this leaflet, please inform your doctor or pharmacist.

Reporting of side effects

If you get side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. You can also report side effects to SAHPRA via the Med Safety APP (Medsafety X SAHPRA) and eReporting platform (who-umc.org) found on SAHPRA website. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of HYDREA.

5. How to store HYDREA

Store all medicines out of reach of children.

- Store at or below 25 °C.
- Avoid excessive heat.
- Keep the container tightly closed.
- Do not use after the expiry date stated on the label.
- Return all unused medicine to your pharmacist.
- Do not dispose of unused medicine in drains or sewerage systems (e.g. toilets).

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What HYDREA contains

The active substance is hydroxyurea.

The other ingredients are: citric acid anhydrous, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, sodium phosphate anhydrous, yellow iron oxide (E172), indigotine (E132), titanium dioxide (E171), gelatine, erythrosine (E127), Opacode S-1-277002.

What HYDREA looks like and contents of the pack

Size "0" gelatine capsule, green opaque cap and pink opaque body, CHP 500 is imprinted on both cap and body of capsule.

HYDREA is packaged in bottles of 100 capsules.

Holder of Certificate of Registration

Equity Pharmaceuticals (Pty) Ltd*

100 Sovereign Drive

Route 21 Corporate Park

Nellmapius Drive

Irene, Pretoria

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Access to the corresponding Professional Information

An electronic copy of the Professional Information (PI) is available on the Equity website http://www.equitypharmaceuticals.co.za or http://www.sahpra.org.za.

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