The Poison Centre has become aware of an anticipated/actual folinic acid injectable (Leucovorin®) shortage. This shortage is not expected to be resolved until the end of September 2019.

Folinic acid is an analog of the activated form of folic acid. Methotrexate will block the conversion of folic acid to activated tetrahydrofolate. No alternative exists for the rescue of methotrexate toxicity. Stocks of Leucovorin® should be reserved for the treatment of these exposures/overdoses. Use of expired stock should be considered if there is no current source. Glucarpidase is reserved for massive overdoses of chemotherapeutic methotrexate in patients with renal insufficiency/failure.

The use of folinic acid for methanol and ethylene glycol toxicity is considered to be supplemental to that of correction of acidosis, blockade of alcohol dehydrogenase as indicated and/or dialysis as indicated. Oral or intravenous folic acid may be substituted (in equivalent doses) for folinic acid with these exposures if all other therapies have been instituted.

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