



Ursopus

1. Name of the medicinal product

Ursopus Capsules

- Active substance:
 - Ursodeoxycholic acid.
 - Silymarin.

2. Qualitative and quantitative composition

One Ursopus capsule contains the following active ingredients:

- Ursodeoxycholic acid 250 mg.
- Silymarin (70%) 146 mg.

For excipients see 5.1.

3. Pharmaceutical form

Hard gelatin capsule.

Appearance: opaque hard gelatin capsule, containing a white compressed powder or granules.

4. Clinical particulars

4.1 Therapeutic indications

For the symptomatic treatment of primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC), provided there is no decompensated hepatic cirrhosis.

As a liver support to improve liver functions.

For the dissolution of radiolucent cholesterol gallstones not larger than 15 mm in diameter in patients with a still functioning gall bladder despite the gall stones.

4.2 Posology, method and duration of use

The dose differs according to the type of illness and the response of the patient. The following daily dose is recommended for the symptomatic treatment of cholestatic liver diseases e.g. primary biliary cirrhosis (PBC):

The daily dose of Ursodeoxycholic acid is 13-15 mg/kg/day for adults with cholestatic diseases. The following regimen is recommended:

| Body weight | Daily dose | Morning | Midday | Evening |
|--------------|------------|---------|--------|---------|
| 34 to 50 kg | 2 capsules | 1 | - | 1 |
| 51 to 70 kg | 3 capsules | 1 | - | 2 |
| 71 to 100 kg | 4 capsules | 1 | - | 3 |
| Over 100 kg | 5 capsules | 1 | 1 | 3 |

And the above daily dose of Ursodeoxycholic acid is compatible with that of Silymarin, which depends on the patient's condition, ranging from 2 to 3 capsules (approx. 140-400 mg). The capsules should be swallowed whole with some liquid. Care should be taken to ensure that they are taken regularly.

The use of Ursopus capsules in primary biliary cirrhosis may be continued indefinitely. In patients with primary biliary cirrhosis, in rare cases the clinical symptoms may worsen at the beginning of treatment, e.g. pruritus may increase. Should this occur, therapy should be continued with a dose of one Ursopus capsule daily, and the dosage then gradually increased by 1 capsule daily each week until the dose indicated in the respective dosage regimen is reached.

4.3 Contraindications

- Ursopus capsules may not be used in:
 - Acute inflammation of the gall bladder or biliary tract.
 - Occlusion of the biliary tract (occlusion of the common bile duct or cystic duct).

Ursopus capsules should not be used in:

- Patients with a gall bladder that cannot be visualized radiologically.
- Calcified gallstones.
- Impaired contractility of the gall bladder.
- Frequent biliary colic.

4.4 Special warnings and special precautions for use

- Ursopus capsules should be taken under medical supervision.
- Improved serum liver tests do not always correlate with improved liver disease status.
- Continue monitoring of GGT, alkaline phosphatase, AST, ALT and bilirubin every month for three months after start of therapy, and every six months thereafter.
- Treatment should be discontinued if the levels of these parameters increase.
- Long-term use of doses exceeding the recommended dose of Ursodeoxycholic acid (i.e., 13-15 mg/kg/d) was associated with improvement in serum liver tests but did not improve survival, and was associated with higher rates of serious adverse events (including death or liver transplantation) compared to placebo.
- In order to assess therapeutic progress and for prompt detection of any calcification of the gallstones, depending on stone size, the gall bladder should be visualized (oral cholecystography) with overview and occlusion in standing and supine positions (ultrasound control) 6 – 10 months after the beginning of treatment.

4.5 Interactions with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction

Ursodeoxycholic acid:

- Ursopus capsules should not be administered concomitantly with cholestyramine, colestipol or antacids containing aluminium hydroxide and/or smectite (aluminium oxide), because these preparations bind Ursodeoxycholic acid in the intestine and thereby reduce its absorption and efficacy. It is necessary to use a preparation containing one of these substances, it must be taken at least 2 hours before or after Ursopus capsules.

Ursopus capsules can increase the absorption of cyclosporin from the intestine. In patients receiving cyclosporin treatment, blood concentrations of this substance should therefore be checked by the physician and the cyclosporin dose adjusted if necessary.

In isolated cases, Ursopus capsules can reduce the absorption of ciprofloxacin.

Ursodeoxycholic acid reduces peak plasma concentrations (C_{max}) and area under the curve (AUC) of the calcium antagonist nifedipine. On this basis, together with in-vitro findings, it may be assumed that Ursodeoxycholic acid induces the drug-metabolizing enzyme cytochrome P450 3A4. Caution should therefore be exercised in cases of co-administration of drugs metabolized via this enzyme, and a dose adjustment may be necessary.

Silymarin:

May interfere with the effects of oestrogen replacement therapy and oral contraceptives due to its possible estrogenic effects.

4.6 Pregnancy and lactation

Ursodeoxycholic acid:

- Animal studies have provided evidence of teratogenic effects during the early phase of gestation.
- There is insufficient experience in humans in the first trimester of pregnancy.
- Women of child-bearing age should be treated only if they use reliable contraception. Pregnancy must be excluded before the beginning of treatment.
- For safety reasons, treatment should not be carried out during the first trimester of pregnancy (see also point 5.3.d "Reproduction toxicology").
- Since there are insufficient data on the passage of Ursodeoxycholic acid into breast-milk, use during the lactation period is contraindicated.

Silymarin:

Due to the estrogen-like effect that may be associated with taking Silymarin, it is preferable to exercise caution in pregnant women.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

No effects on ability to drive and use machines have been observed.

4.8 Undesirable effects

The evaluation of undesirable effects is based on the following frequency data:

| Very common: In more than 10 in 100 patients treated | Common: In more than 1 in 100 patients treated |
|---|--|
| Uncommon: In more than 1 in 1000 patients treated | Rare: In more than 1 in 10,000 patients treated |
| Very rare: In 1 case in 10,000 patients treated or fewer, including isolated cases | |

Gastrointestinal side effects:
In clinical trials, reports of pasty stools or diarrhea during Ursodeoxycholic acid therapy were common.

- Very rarely, severe right side upper abdominal pain has occurred during the treatment of primary biliary cirrhosis.
- In rare cases, the stool may become fatty.

Hepatology disorders:

During treatment with Ursodeoxycholic acid, calcification of gallstones may occur in very rare cases.

During therapy of the advanced stages of primary biliary cirrhosis, in very rare cases, decompensation of the hepatic cirrhosis has been observed, which partially regressed after the treatment was discontinued.

Hypersensitivity reactions:

Very rarely, urticaria could occur.

4.9 Overdose

Diarrhea may occur in cases of overdose. In general, other symptoms of overdose are unlikely because the absorption of Ursodeoxycholic acid decreases with increasing dose and therefore does not exceed with the liver.

If diarrhea occurs, the dose must be reduced and in cases of persistent diarrhea, the therapy should be discontinued.

No specific counter-measures are necessary and the consequences of diarrhea should be treated symptomatically with restoration of fluid and electrolyte balance.

5. Pharmacological properties

5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Ursodeoxycholic acid:

Ursodeoxycholic acid occurs naturally in human bile in small amounts.

After oral administration, it reduces cholesterol saturation of the bile by inhibiting cholesterol synthesis in the liver and cholesterol absorption by the intestine and by decreasing cholesterol secretion into the bile. Presumably as a result of dispersion of the cholesterol and formation of liquid crystals, a gradual dissolution of cholesterol gallstones occurs.

According to current knowledge, the effects of Ursodeoxycholic acid in cholestatic liver diseases are thought to be due to a relative exchange of hydrophobic, lipophilic, detergent-like, toxic bile acids for the hydrophilic, cytoprotective, non-toxic Ursodeoxycholic acid, together with an improvement in the secretory capacity of the hepatocytes, as well as to immune-regulatory processes.

Silymarin:

reduces the turnover of membrane phospholipids, stabilizes cell membrane of hepatocytes, has potent antioxidant action and prevents lipid peroxidation.

5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

Ursodeoxycholic acid:

Absorption:

Following oral administration, Ursodeoxycholic acid is rapidly absorbed in the jejunum and upper ileum through passive transport, and in the terminal ileum through active transport. The rate of absorption is generally 60-80%.

Distribution:

After absorption, Ursodeoxycholic acid undergoes almost complete hepatic conjugation with the amino acids glycine and taurine.

Metabolism:

First-pass clearance through the liver is up to 60%. Under the influence of intestinal bacteria, there is partial degradation to 7-ketolithocholic acid and lithocholic acid. Lithocholic acid is hepatotoxic and causes liver parenchyma damage in a number of animal species. In humans, only very small amounts are absorbed which are sulfated in the liver and thus detoxified.

Elimination:

The biological half-life (t_{1/2}) of Ursodeoxycholic acid is 3-6.8 hours.

Excreted via the bile and ultimately in the feces.

Silymarin

Absorption:

Following oral administration, Silymarin is rapidly absorbed. Peak plasma concentration is achieved after 2 hours. Calculated absorbed fraction from the 140 mg Silymarin of Ursopus capsules is 70%.

Distribution:

In plasma, 90-95% of Silymarin is bound to the protein.

Elimination:

The half-life (t_{1/2}) is 6.3 hours. And because of the relatively high molecular weight, (>90%) is excreted via the bile, and about 10% of the administered dose enters the enterohepatic circulation.

6.3 Preclinical safety data

a. Acute toxicity:

Acute toxicity studies in animals have not revealed any toxic damage.

b. Chronic toxicity:

Subchronic toxicity studies in monkeys showed hepatotoxic effects in the groups given high doses, even in the form of functional changes (including liver enzyme changes) and morphological changes such as bile duct proliferation, portal inflammatory foci and hepatocellular necrosis. These toxic effects are most likely attributable to lithocholic acid, a metabolite of Ursodeoxycholic acid, which in monkeys—unlike humans—is not detoxified. Clinical experience confirms that the described hepatotoxic effects are of no apparent relevance in humans.

c. Carcinogenicity and genotoxicity:

Long-term studies in mice and rats revealed no evidence of carcinogenic potential of Ursodeoxycholic acid.

The test with Ursodeoxycholic acid revealed no evidence of genotoxic effect.

d. Reproductive toxicity:

In studies in rats, tail malformations occurred only after a dose of 2000 mg Ursodeoxycholic acid/kg bodyweight (which would correspond to daily administration of 2.81 in a person weighing 70 kg).

Ursodeoxycholic acid had no effect on fertility in rats, and did not affect peri-post-natal development of the offspring.

In rabbits, no teratogenic effects were found up to a dose of 300 mg Ursodeoxycholic acid/kg bodyweight.

6.4 Pharmaceutical particulars

6.4.1 List of excipients

- Gelatin.
- Colloidal silicon dioxide.
- Magnesium stearate.
- Maize starch.
- Titanium dioxide.

6.4.2 Incompatibilities

None known to date.

6.4.3 Shelf-life

3 years.

6.4.4 Special instructions for storage

No special storage precautions necessary.

6.4.5 Nature and contents of the container

PVC transparent, colourless film, welded with hot seal lacquer to aluminium foil. Package: A box of 2 strips, each strip contains 10 capsules.

6.4.6 Instructions for use and handling, and for disposal

No special instructions.

7. Marketing authorization holder

MINAPHARM Pharmaceuticals
http://www.minapharm.com

8. Legal status

Prescription-only medicine.



