

### Warning

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

## General information for patient

### Protocol: 7 + 3 (Cytarabine and Idarubicin / Daunorubicin)

**Date:** *July 2008*

**Revision:** *January 2018*

Medication	Administration
Cytarabine	Continuous intravenous infusion over 7 days
Idarubicin or Daunorubicin	Intravenous infusion over a few minutes on days 1 through 3

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## General information associated with your treatment

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- › These medications are used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- › You may experience **fatigue** during your treatments. This is usually only temporary and may be related to different reasons (medication, stress, the disease).
- › Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- › Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with *fines herbes* or lemon juice. Eating fruits, chewing non-sugared gums, etc. may mask the metallic taste.
- › **Alcohol** (in small quantities) is permitted and will not affect the efficacy of the treatments.
- › You can have an **active sexual** life during your treatments. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur during this period. This may also be influenced by various factors (fatigue, stress etc.).
- › For **male patients**, the sperm count may be affected and negative effects on the embryo may occur. In fact, the production of spermatozooids may be reduced or completely absent during treatments. In certain patients, this reduction of fertility may be permanent, may get better or return to normal after the treatments have stopped. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. A pregnancy remains possible. If you have sex with a woman of childbearing age it is strongly recommended to use a method of contraception during the treatment.
- › For **pre-menopausal female patients**, chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the menstrual cycle during treatments. After stopping chemotherapy, the menstrual cycle may restart or return to normal. It may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy may be possible and a method of **contraception** is strongly recommended during treatments. Chemotherapy administered during pregnancy may harm the embryo. Breast-feeding is contra-indicated during treatment.
- › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or natural products. These may provoke an interaction with your treatment and diminish its efficacy or increase side effects.
- › Follow the instructions given by your cancer center about the right way to handle and dispose of body fluids (for example urine, stools) in order to protect the environment and your relatives.
- › Be sure to always have at hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to you doctor and your pharmacist. It is important to make them aware of any change.

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## Adverse effects and their management

Adverse effects	Management
Significant <b>nausea</b> and vomiting may occur mainly on the first 3 days of treatment.	› Over the first 3 days of treatment, you will be administered medication on a regular basis to prevent nausea. You will also be prescribed medication to be taken as needed if nausea occurs. Do not hesitate to ask for them if you feel nauseous.
<b>Nausea</b> , usually light, may occur mainly on days 4 through 7 of treatment.	› If nausea occurs or is not relieved by the medication you are taking, tell a member of your healthcare team in order to allow them to adjust your medication to provide relief.
Usually, a <b>total hair loss</b> will occur. In general this may happen 2 to 3 weeks after the start of the treatment. However, don't worry; your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.	› Use a gentle shampoo. › Avoid brushing hair vigorously.
A decrease in white blood cells will occur about a week after the start of the treatment. This decline is inevitable and will be important and extended (3 to 4 weeks). In order to prevent you from becoming infected, you will be isolated throughout this period. The nursing staff will monitor your temperature and you will be administered antibiotics if required.	› Wash your hands often. › During this period, avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases. › Quickly tell a member of your healthcare team if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate, etc.).
A decrease in <b>platelets</b> will begin about 1 week after the start of treatment. This decline will be important and prolonged (4 to 5 weeks). You may bruise or bleed more easily than you normally do.	› Use a tooth brush with soft bristles. › Tell a member of your healthcare team if you notice any kind of bleeding (bloody urine or stools, blood in you mouth or nose, etc.).

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A majority of patients will develop a fever at some point after the treatment. Blood will be drawn to check for bacteria. Having a fever does not necessarily mean that you have an infection, but you will nonetheless be given an antibiotic as a precautionary measure. Even with antibiotics, fever may last until your white blood cell level comes back normal. At that moment, antibiotics could be discontinued.	› Tell a member of your healthcare team if you notice any sign of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate...).
<b>Ulcers in the mouth and the throat</b> may appear approximately 7 to 10 days following the start of your treatment. These ulcers can also appear in the throat.	› Gently and regularly brush your teeth after each meal and at bedtime. › Rinse your mouth with a solution of water and salt with or without baking soda. Gargle 4 times a day – after every meal and at bedtime. Do not drink or eat for one hour after you gargle. › Mouthwashes without alcohol found in stores are a good alternative. › If you notice ulcers, redness or painful areas in your mouth, quickly notify a member of your healthcare team.
You may sometimes experience <b>diarrhea</b> , which may start approximately 5-8 days after the start of treatment.	› Drink lots of liquids (unless otherwise instructed by your doctor). › Please tell a member of your healthcare team if you have significant diarrhea (more than 3 loose stools per day) for more than 24 hours.
A <b>skin rash</b> may occur following your treatment. This skin reaction may or may not be associated with itchiness.	› Notify a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures.
You may experience <b>shortness of breath, swelling</b> of the ankles and rapid heartbeats.	› If you notice any one of these effects, tell a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible.

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Adverse effects	Management
During the first 3 days of your treatment, you may experience some <b>pain, irritation, swelling or a burning sensation at the injection site</b> during the administration of idarubicin or daunorubicin.	› Notify your nurse immediately if you feel any of these symptoms during treatment.

### Special considerations

- › It is very important to drink plenty of fluids during your treatment, especially during the first 3 days of treatment. You will also be hydrated through the intravenous route as well and you may be prescribed a drug (allopurinol) in order to prevent problems that can arise when abnormal cells are rapidly destroyed by chemotherapy.
- › Your **urine** may be a **reddish color** throughout the first 3 days of treatment. This is normal and corresponds to the elimination of the idarubicin or daunorubicin. Don't worry, it is not blood.

Pharmacist: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_ h to \_\_\_\_ h (Monday to Friday)