

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 Patients

Protocol : R - CHOP

Date: September 2003

Revision date: May 2016

MEDICATION	ADMINISTRATION
Rituximab	Intravenous infusion over a few hours
Vincristine	Intravenously over 5 to 10 minutes.
Doxorubicine	Intravenously over 5 to 10 minutes.
Cyclophosphamide	Intravenous infusion over 20 to 30 minutes.
Prednisone	Orally (tablets) once a day for 5 days at breakfast
<i>Treatment repeated every 3 weeks</i>	

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General Information associated with your treatment

- ❑ This treatment is used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- ❑ A **blood test** will be done prior to every treatment cycle. Depending on its results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of the medication might be adjusted or the treatment might be delayed.
- ❑ You may experience **fatigue** during your treatments. This is usually only temporary and may be related to different reasons (medication, stress, the disease). Maintain a good level of activity but rest when you feel the need to.
- ❑ Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- ❑ Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with fine herbs or lemon juice. Eating fruits, chewing non-sugared gums, etc. may mask the metallic taste.
- ❑ Consumption of **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 different 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 ameliorate or return to normal after the treatments have stopped. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. If you have sex with a woman of childbearing age it is strongly recommended that an effective method of contraception be used.
- ❑ For **pre-menopausal female patients**, chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the menstrual cycle during treatments. The menstrual cycle, after stopping chemotherapy, may restart or return to normal. It may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy remains 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 chemotherapy.
- ❑ 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 Management

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Severe nausea and vomiting may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be prescribed medication to prevent nausea to be taken prior to treatment. At home, you will take medication on a regular basis during 1 or 2 days following your treatment, depending on your need. Communicate with your doctor or pharmacist if the nausea or vomiting is not relieved by your medication.
Usually, a total hair loss will occur. In general, this may happen 2 to 3 weeks after the treatment. However, don't worry, your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a gentle shampoo. Avoid brushing hair vigorously in order to slow down the hair loss.
A decrease in the white blood cells will occur 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contact infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash your hands often. Avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases. Quickly contact a member of your healthcare team if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate...) Consult your doctor or go immediately to the Emergency Department if you have a fever of 38.3°C (101°F) once or 38°C (100.4°F) twice one hour apart. In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin®, Advil®).

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A decrease in platelets will occur 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may bleed more easily than you normally do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a tooth brush with soft bristles.• Check with your pharmacist before taking medications with Aspirin®, ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory drugs.• Consult us if you bruise more easily than you normally do or if you have a tendency to bleed easily from the nose or the gums.
You may experience infusion-related reactions with rituximab, usually within 30 minutes to 2 hours of the start of the infusion. The most common reactions are fever and chills but hives, itching, hot flashes, difficulty breathing, headache, dizziness, nausea, swelling of tongue may also happen. These symptoms, usually mild to moderate, are more frequent during the first infusion and less common with subsequent infusions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medication to prevent allergic reactions will be prescribed prior to treatment.• Notify the nurse if these symptoms occur during the administration of the drug. Medication can be given to alleviate these symptoms.
Cyclophosphamide may irritate your bladder .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink lots of water and liquids (10-12 glasses of 230 ml or 8 oz a day) for 48 hours following your treatment (unless otherwise recommended by your doctor) and urinate frequently.• If you experience any of these symptoms: difficulty urinating, pain while you urinate, and/or blood in your urine, consult us as soon as possible.
Prednisone may cause heartburn, increased appetite, nervousness or sleep disturbances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take prednisone in the morning at breakfast to minimize side effects.• If you experience any of these symptoms, consult your pharmacist or your doctor who will recommend appropriate measures.

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Mouth ulcers may appear approximately 7 to 10 days following the start of your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, contact a member of your healthcare team.
You may experience constipation and abdominal cramps. This phenomenon usually increases with the number of treatments received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate laxatives if they are necessary.
You may experience numbness or tingling of the hands and feet . This phenomenon usually increases with the number of treatments received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If these side effects impair your normal daily activities, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.
You may experience shortness of breath, swelling of the ankles and rapid heartbeats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you notice any one of these effects, contact us as soon as possible.
During your treatment, you may experience some pain, irritation, swelling or a burning sensation at the injection site .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notify your nurse immediately if you feel any of these symptoms during treatment.
Rarely, you may experience pain or abdominal cramps. This may happen mainly in the first weeks of your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notify a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible and consult your doctor.

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Special Considerations

- ❑ If you are taking high blood pressure medication, you should stop taking them at least 12 hours prior the administration of rituximab. Your pharmacist or your doctor will advise you on how to take them.
- ❑ Your **urine** may be a **reddish colour** the same day or the day following your treatment. This is normal and corresponds to the elimination of doxorubicine. Don't worry. It is not blood.
- ❑ Take your **prednisone tablets**, as prescribed once a day, **preferably in the morning during your meal**. If you forget a dose, you may take it as soon as you remember but do not double your next dose. Try, however, to take your pills **in a regular, routine manner**.
- ❑ You must avoid consuming **grapefruit**, Seville orange, starfruit, pomelo, pomegranate or foods containing the aforementioned fruits because of an interaction that could increase the side effects of your treatment.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

From ____h to ____h (Monday to Friday)