

### 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 – CVP

**Date:** September 2005

**Revision date:** May 2016

MEDICATION	ADMINISTRATION
Rituximab	Intravenous infusion over a few hours
Vincristine	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
Moderate <b>nausea</b> and vomiting may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You will be prescribed medication to prevent nausea to be taken prior to treatment. After the treatment, at home, you will take medication as needed for 1 or 2 days, or more, depending on your reaction.</li><li>Communicate with your doctor or pharmacist if you have nausea or vomiting that is not relieved by medication.</li></ul>
Depending on the individual, a <b>partial or total hair loss</b> may occur. In general, this happens 2 to 3 weeks after the start of the treatment. However, don't worry; your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use gentle shampoo.</li><li>Avoid brushing hair vigorously.</li><li>Avoid hair spray, dyes and perms.</li></ul>
A decrease in the <b>white blood cells</b> will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contact infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wash your hands often.</li><li>Avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases.</li><li>Quickly contact a member of your healthcare team if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate...)</li><li>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.</li><li>In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin®, Advil®).</li></ul>

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A decrease in <b>platelets</b> will occur 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may bleed more easily than you normally do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use a tooth brush with soft bristles.</li><li>• Check with your pharmacist before taking medications with Aspirin®, ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory drugs.</li><li>• Consult a member of your healthcare team if you bruise more easily than you normally do or if you have a tendency to bleed easily from the nose or the gums.</li></ul>
You may experience <b>infusion-related reactions</b> with <b>rituximab</b> , 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 the 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"><li>• Medication to prevent allergic reactions will be prescribed prior to treatment.</li><li>• Notify the nurse if these symptoms occur during the administration of the drug. Medication can be given to alleviate these symptoms.</li></ul>
Cyclophosphamide may <b>irritate</b> your <b>bladder</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
<b>Prednisone</b> may cause <b>heartburn</b> , <b>increased appetite</b> , <b>nervousness</b> or <b>sleep disturbances</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take prednisone in the morning at breakfast to minimize side effects.</li><li>• If you experience any of these symptoms, consult your pharmacist or your doctor who will recommend appropriate measures.</li></ul>

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<b>ADVERSE EFFECTS</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>
You may experience <b>constipation</b> and <b>abdominal cramps</b> . This phenomenon usually increases with the number of treatments received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate laxatives if they are necessary.</li></ul>
You may experience <b>numbness or tingling of the hands and feet</b> . This phenomenon usually increases with the number of treatments received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you experience these symptoms, notify your doctor or your pharmacist at your next visit.</li></ul>
You may experience <b>jaw pain</b> a few hours following the administration of vincristine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you experience this pain, speak with your doctor or your pharmacist who will recommend an analgesic.</li></ul>
During your treatment, you may experience some <b>pain, irritation, swelling or a burning sensation at the injection site</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notify your nurse immediately if you feel any of these symptoms during treatment.</li></ul>
Rarely, you may experience <b>pain or abdominal cramps</b> . This may happen mainly in the first weeks of your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notify a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible and consult your doctor.</li></ul>

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### Special Considerations

- ❑ 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**.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 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)