

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: Bortezomib – dexamethasone (weekly)

Date: May 2016

Revision:

MEDICATION	ADMINISTRATION
Bortezomib	Intravenously over three to five seconds or subcutaneously in the thigh or abdomen Day 1, 8, 15 and 22
Dexamethasone tablets to take once a day in the morning Days 1, 8, 15 and 22 OR as follows:
<i>Cycle repeated every 35 days.</i>	

General information associated with your treatment

- These medications are 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 medication might be adjusted or treatment might be delayed.
- Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with herbs 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 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 get better or return to normal after the treatments have stopped. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. It is recommended that an effective method of contraception be used.
- In **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 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.

Adverse effects and management

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Nausea , usually light, may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before your treatment, medication to prevent nausea may be prescribed. At home, you may also have to take medication for 1 or 2 days or more, as needed. Communicate with your doctor or pharmacist if your medication does not relieve your nausea.
Usually there is no hair loss with this treatment.	
Although not likely, a decrease in the white blood cells might occur following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contact infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash your hands often. During this period, avoid coming in contact with people who have contagious diseases. Contact us quickly if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate, etc.). Consult your doctor or go immediately to the Emergency Room if you have a fever 38,3 °C (101 °F) once or 38 °C (100.4 °F) twice an hour apart. In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin®, Advil®).
Significant fatigue and weakness may occur during your treatments. It is usually temporary and may be related to many factors (medication, stress, disease, etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a good level of activity but take some rest when you feel tired.

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
You may sometimes experience diarrhea .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink lots of liquids (unless otherwise instructed by your doctor). • Please contact us if you have significant diarrhea (more than three loose stools per day) for more than 24 to 48 hours.
A decrease in platelets may occur during your 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 your pharmacist or doctor 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 constipation .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if possible. • Drink lots of fluids (at least eight glasses a day). • Eat foods that are rich in fibre (cereals, fruits and vegetables). • Consult your pharmacist or doctor who, if necessary, will prescribe the appropriate laxatives.
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 you experience these symptoms, notify a member of your healthcare team at your next visit.
Dexamethasone tablets may cause heartburn, increased appetite, nervousness and sleep disturbances .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To minimize these side effects, take the tablets with food in the morning. Notify a member of your healthcare team if these symptoms occur and affect your daily activities. Some measures can be recommended.

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Fever may occur a few hours following your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify your pharmacist who will recommend appropriate measures to be taken.
Redness, pain, sensitivity, swelling or reaction at the injection site may occur during your treatment if you receive bortezomib by subcutaneous injection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply lukewarm or cold compresses for 15 to 20 minutes many times per day on the injection site. If you notify any of these effects and they persist despite the application of compresses, communicate with a member of your healthcare team.

Special considerations

Bortezomib might cause low blood pressure that may lead to tiredness, dizziness, fainting, or blurred vision. Do not drive or operate any dangerous tools or machines if you experience such side effects.

Green tea or vitamin C modifies bortezomib's action. Avoid green tea and drinks or food that contain green tea or vitamin C supplements for the whole duration of your treatment with bortezomib.

Take your **dexamethasone 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**.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

From ____ h to ____ h (Monday to Friday)