

### 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

### Fluorouracil continuous infusion *per-radiation*

**Date:** June 2016

**Revision :**

Médicament	Horaire d'administration
Fluorouracil	Continuous intravenous infusion throughout radiation therapy for about 5 weeks

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### General information associated with your treatment

- › Fluorouracil is used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and to 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 installation of the infusing device 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.
- › **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. In fact, the production of spermatozooids may be reduced or completely absent during treatments. This reduction of **fertility** does not prevent erection or sexual activity. In some patients, this reduction of fertility may be permanent, may ameliorate or return to normal after the treatments have stopped. 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. 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 their management

Adverse effects	Management
<b>Nausea</b> , usually light, may occur mainly throughout your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Before your treatment, medication to prevent nausea may be prescribed. At home, you may also have to take medication as needed.</li><li>› Contact a member of your healthcare team if your medication doesn't not relieve your nausea.</li></ul>
Depending on the individual, <b>thinning of the hair</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 sprays, dyes and perms.</li></ul>
A decrease in the <b>white blood cells</b> is unlikely during your treatment. Nevertheless, you could be at higher risk to contract infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Wash your hands often.</li><li>› During this period, avoid coming in contact with people who have contagious diseases.</li><li>› Contact a member of your healthcare team quickly 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 Room if you have a fever 38,3 °C (101°F) once or 38 °C (100,4°F) twice an hour apart.</li><li>› In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (Ex. Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (Ex : Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®..).</li></ul>
A decrease in <b>platelets</b> is unlikely but may occur. 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>

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You may sometimes experience <b>diarrhea</b> , which may start approximately 5-8 days after the start of treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Drink lots of liquids unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.</li><li>› Please contact a member of your healthcare team if you have significant diarrhea (more than 3 loose stools per day) for more than 24 hours.</li><li>› If you have with diarrhea with fever, contact immediately a member of your health care team.</li></ul>
<b>Hand and foot syndrome</b> may appear during your treatment. You may experience numbness, tingling, swelling, redness on your hands and feet. Pain, blisters, desquamation may accompany these symptoms.	<p><b>To prevent this syndrome:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Avoid wearing tight clothes or shoes. Wear absorbent sponge rubber soles, and/or gel pads to relieve pressure points.</li><li>› Pat dry your hands and feet rather than rubbing them.</li><li>› Wear light clothing or keep skin free of clothing to avoid perspiring.</li><li>› Wear rubber gloves while washing dishes</li><li>› Wash your hands and feet in lukewarm water; avoid hot water.</li><li>› Moisturize your skin regularly using a non perfumed emollient and thick cream.</li><li>› Avoid activities that require applying pressure and repetitive friction on your hands and feet.</li></ul> <p><b>If symptoms occur:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› If these symptoms occur and affect your daily activities, notify a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible. Your pharmacist or doctor will recommend appropriate treatment to relieve your symptoms.</li></ul>
Your <b>eyes</b> may become <b>excessively teary</b> , itchy and may or may not develop redness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Contact a member of your healthcare team who can recommend appropriate treatment.</li></ul>
Your skin may become more <b>sensitive to the sun</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Avoid going into the sun.</li><li>› Use sun screen SPF 30 or higher.</li><li>› Wear a hat.</li></ul>
Your <b>skin</b> may become <b>drier</b> . Redness and itchiness may develop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Use a non-perfumed moisturizing cream as needed.</li></ul>

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During radiotherapy, you may experience a <b>local irritation</b> in the rectum or the anus which may become severe.	›	Consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures to relieve your symptoms.	
Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor			
If you experience <b>rapid heartbeats</b> , pain in the chest and/or sudden shortness of breath.	›	If you experience any of these symptoms, immediately go to the Emergency Room.	

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

From \_\_\_\_h to \_\_\_\_h (Monday to Friday)