

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 Dacarbazine (DTIC)

Date: May 2012

Revision: November 2016

Medication	Administration
Dacarbazine (DTIC)	Intravenously over 1 to 2 hours on day 1
<i>Cycle repeated every 3 weeks</i>	

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General information associated with your treatment

- › Dacarbazine 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 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 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 for the duration of treatments.
- › 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 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 management

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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 a member of your healthcare team if the nausea or vomiting is not relieved by your medication.
Depending on the individual, thinning of the hair 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">› Use gentle shampoo.› Avoid brushing hair vigorously.› Avoid hair spray, dyes and perms.
A decrease in the white blood cells may occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk to contract 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 a member of your healthcare team 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 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®, Aleve®).

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You may experience constipation .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Exercise if possible.› Drink lots of fluids (at least 8 glasses a day).› Communicate with a member of your healthcare team who, if necessary, will prescribe the appropriate laxatives.
Flu-like symptoms may occur shortly after your treatment. You may experience mild to moderate symptoms consisting mainly of fever but also chills, headache, muscle or bone pain. These symptoms usually last only a few hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› If these symptoms bother you, your doctor or pharmacist may recommend a pain killer such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®, Atasol®).› If you experience fever and chills more than 48 hours after your treatment, you may have an infection. Consult immediately a member of your healthcare team or go to the Emergency Room.
Your skin may become more sensitive to the sun .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Avoid exposure to the sun.› Use sun screen SPF 30 or higher.› Wear a hat.
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.

Special consideration

Your skin may become darker in certain areas of your body. This is due to dacarbazine and the look of your skin will return to its normal color after the end of your treatments.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

From ____ h to ____ h (Monday to Friday)