

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 Arsenic trioxide and ATRA (tretinoin)

Date: November 2016

Revision date:

Medication	Administration
Induction	
Arsenic trioxide	Intravenous infusion over 2 hours once daily
ATRA (tretinoin)	Capsules to be taken by mouth twice daily with food: _____ capsules with breakfast _____ capsules with supper
Prednisone	Tablets to be taken by mouth once daily in the morning with food: _____ tablets of 50 mg and _____ tablets of 5 mg
<i>To be administered every day until disease control up to a maximum of 60 days</i>	

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Medication	Administration
Consolidation	
Arsenic trioxide	<p>Intravenous infusion over 2 hours once daily, 5 days a week, Monday to Friday for 4 weeks.</p> <p><i>Followed by 4 weeks without arsenic trioxide.</i></p> <p><i>For 4 cycles</i></p>
ATRA (tretinoin)	<p>Capsules to be taken by mouth twice daily with food for 2 weeks:</p> <p>_____ capsules with breakfast</p> <p>_____ capsules with supper</p> <p><i>Followed by 2 weeks without ATRA</i></p> <p><i>For 7 cycles.</i></p>

Treatment regimen

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Arsenic																												
ATRA																												

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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 regularly during treatment. Depending on the results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of the medication might be adjusted or the treatment might be delayed.
- › Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- › 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 **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with *fines herbes* or lemon juice. Eating fruits and non sugared candies, 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. Your partner will not be exposed to, nor harmed by chemotherapy effects. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur during this period. This may also be influenced by different factors (fatigue, stress etc.)
- › In **pre-menopausal female patients**, chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the **menstrual cycle** during treatment. The menstrual cycle may restart or return to normal after the end of treatment. The menstrual cycle may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy remains possible and chemotherapy administered during pregnancy may harm the embryo. Two birth control methods are strongly recommended during treatment and up to 3 months after the end of treatment. Breast-feeding is contra-indicated during treatment.
- › 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 treatment. 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 two birth control methods during treatment and up to 3 months after the end of treatment.
- › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription), natural health products or if you need to receive a vaccine. 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 biological fluids (for example urine, stools) in order to protect the environment and your relatives.
- › Be sure to always have on hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to your 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
Significant nausea and vomiting may occur during your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› You will be prescribed medication to be taken as needed.› 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 following the start of treatment. You may be at higher risk of infections during this period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Wash your hands often.› During this period, avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases.› 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.› Contact a member of your healthcare team quickly if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while urinating...).› In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (Ex: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (Ex : Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®,...).
A decrease in platelets may occur after the start of treatment. You may bruise or 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.› Contact 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.

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Fever may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Tell a member of your healthcare team if you notice any sign of infection (fever, chills, cough, throat pain, pain when urinating...). › Blood will be drawn to check for bacteria. Having a fever does not necessarily mean that you have an infection, but you will still be given an antibiotic as a precaution. Even with antibiotics, fever may last until your white blood cell level comes back normal. At that moment, antibiotics can be discontinued.
A skin rash , usually mild, may occur following your treatment. It generally involves the trunk, the arms and legs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Use a non-perfumed moisturizing cream many times a day as needed. › Avoid going into the sun. › Use sun screen with SPF 30 or higher.
Your skin may become drier . Redness and itchiness may develop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Wear a hat. › If despite these measures, a skin rash appears and is uncomfortable, consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures.
Your skin may become more sensitive to the sun .	
Your lips and your mouth may also become dryer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Apply a lip balm many times a day as needed. › Drink small amounts of water regularly. › For dry mouth, suck on hard candies or ice chips. Artificial saliva can be used if needed. › If despite these measures symptoms are bothering you, consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures.
You may experience headaches .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › If this happens, talk to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend an appropriate analgesic. › Avoid analgesics that increase risk of bleeding such as Aspirin®, ibuprofen, naproxen or other anti-inflammatory drugs.
Irregular or fast heartbeat can rarely occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › If you notice these symptoms, contact a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible. › These medications can cause heart problems, often without any symptom. You will have to undergo tests regularly.

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You may sometimes experience diarrhea .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Drink lots of liquids unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. › 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. › If you have with diarrhea with fever, contact immediately a member of your health care team.
You may experience numbness or tingling of the hands and feet .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › If you experience these symptoms, notify a member of your healthcare team at your next visit.
You may experience muscle, bone and joint pain and cramps .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › If this occurs, speak to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend analgesics. Avoid analgesics that increase risk of bleeding such as Aspirin®, ibuprofen, naproxen or other anti-inflammatory drugs.
You may experience constipation and abdominal pain .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Consult a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate laxatives if they are necessary.
A gradual fluid retention may occur with consecutive treatments and may present itself by swelling of hands, ankles and feet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Raise your feet while sitting. › Avoid wearing tight clothes or shoes. › Notify your doctor if you are gaining weight rapidly, if you experience some swelling or if you are easily short of breath.
Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor	
You may experience a differentiation syndrome which usually occurs during induction. You may experience cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing associated with chest pain, fever, weight gain and fluid retention (swelling).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A medication, prednisone will be prescribed during induction to prevent this effect. › Notify a member of your healthcare team immediately if you experience these symptoms.
Rarely, you may experience pain in your calf or leg with a heat sensation, redness or you may suddenly experience difficulty breathing .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › If you experience any of these symptoms, immediately consult your doctor or go to the Emergency Room.

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Adverse effects	Management
If you experience any of the following symptoms: Severe headache, visual problems, difficulty talking, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness, confusion, chest pain or chest tightness.	› Notify a member of your healthcare team immediately or go immediately to the Emergency Room.

Special Considerations

- › You may have to take potassium and magnesium supplements depending on your blood test results.
- › Avoid vitamins or supplements containing **vitamin A** since they can increase the side effects of your treatment. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take supplements or vitamins.
- › Take your ATRA capsules, as prescribed, twice a day with food.
- › **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 capsules at the same time every day.
- › Capsules must be taken whole. Do not open the capsules.
- › Wash your hands immediately after handling your capsules.
- › Keep your medication at room temperature, out of reach of children and protected from light, heat or moisture
- › Don't throw away unused medication at home. Bring it back to your pharmacy to be destroyed safely.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

from _____ h to _____ h (Monday to Friday)