

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 Cladribine

Date: *May 2017*

Revision:

Medication	Administration
Cladribine	Continuous intravenous infusion over 7 days
	or
	Intravenous infusion over 2 hours for 5 days

One cycle only

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General Information associated with your treatment:

- › Cladribine is used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- › A **blood test** will be done regularly during your treatment.
- › Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- › 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 treatment. 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. A **birth control method** is strongly recommended during 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 spermatozoids 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** during the treatment.
- › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or **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
Rarely, slight nausea may occur during your treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› You may be prescribed medication to be taken at home as needed.› Contact a member of your healthcare team if you have nausea that bothers you.
Usually there is no hair loss with this treatment.	
A decrease in the white blood cells will occur about 1 to 2 weeks after 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[®],...).
Your immune system will be impaired for many months after your treatment. You will be at a higher risk of infections .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› You may be prescribed a few medications (antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals) to decrease the risk of infection.
A decrease in platelets will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following 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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You may experience a decrease in red blood cells following your treatment. This phenomenon is called anemia and is characterized by signs of fatigue, pale color, dizziness and shortness of breath.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Keep active but respect signs of fatigue your body gives you; rest when you feel the need to.› If you notice one or any of these effects, contact a member of your healthcare team.
A skin rash , usually mild, may occur following your treatment. Your skin may become drier . Redness and itchiness may develop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Use a non perfumed moisturizing cream as needed.› If this occurs, speak to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend appropriate measures.› If these symptoms are severe or extended, either associated with blisters or your skin is peeling, contact immediately a member of your healthcare team.
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.
Rarely, leg weakness, numbness or tingling of hand and feet may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› If you experience these symptoms or if you have difficulty to attach your buttons and to take small objects, if you experience pain or if you have difficulty moving, notify a member of your healthcare team.

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

from ___ h to ___ h (Monday to Friday)