

### 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 Protocol : AC

**Date:** *December 2002*

**Revision date:** *April 2016*

| Medication                                           | Administration                             |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Doxorubicine                                         | Intravenous over a few minutes             |
| Cyclophosphamide                                     | Intravenous infusion over 20 to 30 minutes |
| <i>Treatment repeated every 3 weeks for 4 cycles</i> |                                            |

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## General Information associated with your treatment

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- › These medications are used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- › A **blood test** will be done prior to every 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.
- › 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 *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. 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 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 during the treatment.
- › 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.
- › Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or natural health products. These may provoke an interaction with your treatment and diminish its efficacy or increase side effects.

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## Adverse effects and their management

| Adverse effects                                                                                                                                                                                       | Management                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant <b>nausea</b> and vomiting may occur mainly on the same day and the day following your treatment.                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› You will be prescribed medication to prevent nausea to be taken prior to treatment.</li><li>› You will also be prescribed medication to be taken at home on a regular basis for 2 to 3 days or more.</li><li>› Communicate with a member of your healthcare team if the nausea or vomiting is not relieved by your medication.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Usually, a <b>total hair loss</b> will occur. In general this may happen 2 to 3 weeks after the start of the treatment. However, don't worry; your hair should grow back after treatments have ended. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Use a gentle shampoo.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| A decrease in the <b>white blood cells</b> will occur about 1 to 2 weeks following treatment. You may be at higher risk of infections during this period.                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Wash your hands often.</li><li>› During this period, avoid coming into 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 urinating...).</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> |
| Cyclophosphamide may <b>irritate</b> your <b>bladder</b> .                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Drink lots of water and liquids (10-12 glasses of 230 ml or 8 oz a day) for 48 hours following your treatment unless otherwise recommended by your doctor.</li><li>› Consult a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible if you experience any of these symptoms: difficulty urinating, pain while you urinate, and/or blood in your urine.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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| Adverse effects                                                                                                                                                                 | Management                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ulcers in the mouth</b> and the throat may appear approximately 7 to 10 days following the start of your treatment. These ulcers can also appear in the throat.              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Gently and regularly brush your teeth after each meal and at bedtime.</li><li>› Rinse your mouth with a solution of water and salt with or without baking soda. Gargle 4 times a day – after every meal and at bedtime. Do not drink or eat for one hour after you gargle.</li><li>› Mouthwashes <b>without alcohol</b> found in stores are a good alternative.</li><li>› If you notice ulcers, redness or painful areas in your mouth, contact a member of your healthcare team.</li></ul> |
| <b>Pain, irritation, swelling or a burning sensation</b> at the injection site may occur during treatment.                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› Immediately advise your nurse if you experience this malaise during infusion.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Rare adverse effects that can be severe or serious to communicate quickly to your doctor</b>                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| You may experience <b>shortness of breath, swelling</b> of the ankles and rapid heartbeats.<br><br>This could be related to some harmful effects of doxorubicine on your heart. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>› If you notice any of these effects, contact a member of your healthcare team as soon as possible.</li><li>› Furthermore, you will have to do a cardiac test to evaluate your heart.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

### Special Considerations

You must avoid consuming **grapefruit** juice or grapefruit, Seville orange, starfruit, pomelo and pomegranate because of an interaction that could increase the side effects of doxorubicine.

Your **urine** may be a **reddish color** the same day or the day following your treatment. This is normal and corresponds to the elimination of doxorubicine. Don't worry, it is not blood.

**Pharmacist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_\_ h to \_\_\_\_\_ h (Monday to Friday)