

## Medication Information Sheet

**alemtuzumab** (A-LEM-tooz-a-mab)

*This document provides general information about your medication. It does not replace the advice of your health care professional. Always discuss your therapy with your health care professional and refer to the package insert for more details.*

**Other Name:** MabCampath®, Campath®

**Appearance:** Clear, colorless solution ; may be mixed into larger bags of fluids

**What is this medication for?**

- For treating chronic leukemia.

**What should I do before I have this medication?**

- Tell your doctor if you have/had significant medical condition(s), especially if you have / had infection involving the brain, current infections, other cancers, or any allergies.
- Alemtuzumab may harm the unborn baby.
- Let your doctor know if you are breastfeeding, pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- People who have cancer/leukemia are at a higher risk of developing other cancers/leukemias or blood clots. Some cancer medications, such as alemtuzumab, may increase these risks. You should discuss these with your doctor.

**How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?**

- Do not use this drug if you are pregnant. If there is ANY chance that you or your partner may become pregnant, you and your partner together must: ► **Use 2 effective forms of birth control at the same time** while taking this drug: Keep using birth control until **6 months** after the last dose (general recommendation). Discuss with your healthcare team.
- Do not breastfeed while taking this drug and for at least 3 months after treatment ends (after discussing with your doctor).
- Effects on Fertility: Probable

**How is this medication given?**

- This drug is given by injection under the skin or into a vein.

## What else do I need to know while on this medication?

- This medication can interact with other medications and can result in the treatment not working as well or cause severe side effects.
- Make sure your health care team knows about all your medications (prescription, over-the-counter, herbals and supplements). Check with your health care team before starting or stopping any of them.
- For mild aches and pain:
  - You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets. Ask your health care team about the right dose for you.
  - Talk to your health care team first before starting ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid, ASA), since these may increase your chance of bleeding.
  - If you are already taking aspirin regularly, such as for heart conditions; Do not stop it- talk to your health care team first.
  - If you feel unwell, take your temperature before using any of these drugs. They may hide a fever. **Phone your health care team or go to the closest emergency room right away if you have a fever.** See the [Fever](#) pamphlet for more information.

## What are the side effects of this medication?

- The following side effects are common or severe. You may not have all of the side effects. Other side effects may occur. If you have any unusual or bothersome symptoms, discuss with your doctor.

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
<b>More Common Side Effects</b>	
<p><b><i>Unusual bleeding or bruising</i></b></p> <p>You may have black stools, cough up blood, blood in your urine, purple or red dots on your skin or bleeding that will not stop.</p> <p><b><i>Fever, chills, infection</i></b></p> <p>You have a fever if your temperature taken in your mouth (oral temperature) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>38.3°C (100.9°F) or higher at any time OR</b></li> <li>• <b>38.0°C (100.4°F) or higher for at least one hour.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Get emergency medical help right away</p>

\*The most updated version and more symptom control information can be found on: <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/druginfo>  
 Prepared with input from the Cancer Care Ontario-Medication Information Sheets Working Group.  
 April 2016

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
<b>More Common Side Effects</b>	
<p>While you are getting chemotherapy treatments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a digital thermometer at home and take your temperature if you feel hot or unwell (for example, chills).</li> <li>• Avoid taking medications that treat a fever before you take your temperature (for example, Tylenol®, acetaminophen, Advil® or ibuprofen) as they may hide a fever.</li> <li>• Do not eat or drink anything hot or cold right before taking your temperature.</li> <li>• Wash your hands often.</li> <li>• Check with your doctor before getting any vaccines, surgeries or visiting your dentist.</li> </ul> <p><b>If you have a fever, talk to your health care team or go to the closest emergency room.</b> See our <a href="#">Neutropenia (Low white blood cell count)</a> pamphlet for more information.</p>	
<p><b><i>Nausea and vomiting</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink clear fluids and avoid large meals. Get fresh air and rest.</li> <li>• Limit spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell.</li> <li>• Take anti-nausea drug(s) exactly as directed by your doctor. It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it.</li> <li>• Contact your doctor if nausea lasts more than 48 hours or vomiting for more than 24 hours.</li> <li>• Also see Nausea &amp; Vomiting pamphlet.*</li> </ul>	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>
<p><b><i>Rash; dry, itchy skin</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay out of the sun; wear sunblock, a hat and cover exposed skin.</li> <li>• Use daily moisturizer.</li> <li>• If severe, get emergency medical help right away.</li> </ul>	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>
<p><b><i>Headache</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take painkiller(s) as directed, if given to you by your doctor.</li> <li>• Otherwise, take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets as needed for mild aches and pains. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the right dose for you.</li> <li>• Rest often, but may try light exercise.</li> </ul>	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>

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<b>More Common Side Effects</b>	
<p><b>Drug reaction; Infusion reaction</b> (fever, severe rash, itchiness, flushing, dizziness, low blood pressure, shortness of breath, chest or throat tightness)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may be given medicines to prevent or treat this reaction</li> <li>May occur during or shortly after the the drug is given.</li> <li>In rare cases this may cause heart problems (irregular heartbeat, heart attack)</li> </ul>	Get emergency medical help right away

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
<b>Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe</b>	
<p><b>Heart problems</b> (irregular heartbeat, chest pain, fainting, swelling, shortness of breath)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Rapid killing of cancer cells when you start treatment may lead to build up of cell waste products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If mild, this may cause gout, with joint pains, but if severe, may cause fevers, kidney failure, confusion and be life-threatening.</li> <li>You MUST take the preventive medicines given by your doctor AND</li> <li>Drink plenty of fluids (6-8 glasses per day) and void (urinate) frequently.</li> </ul>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Blockage of an artery</b> (blood vessel) in your heart, brain, chest, belly, or limbs; this may result in <b>stroke</b> (sudden loss of vision, speech, or the use of your limb(s)) or <b>heart attack</b> (chest pain, shortness of breath), or pain in chest, belly or limb</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Blocked intestines</b> (severe belly pain, bloating, severe constipation)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Rupture in stomach or intestine wall</b> (Sudden, severe pain in belly or stomach area)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Autoimmune disorder</b></p>	Get emergency medical help right away

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<b>Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe</b>	
<p><b>Kidney problems</b> (lower back pain, body swelling)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also look for passing little or no urine, darkening or blood in urine, or recent unusual weight gain</li> </ul>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Pancreas problems</b> (increased pain in centre of belly and may extend to back, appetite or weight loss)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Lung problems</b> (increased cough, breathing problems, chest pain, coughing blood)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Gall bladder problems</b> (severe pain and tenderness in the upper right belly, pain may spread to your right shoulder or back, nausea, vomiting, yellowing of skin or eyes)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><b>Blood clot</b> (limb pain or swelling, hardened vein in limb), may occur in lungs (sudden start of coughing, breathing problems, chest pain, coughing blood)</p>	Get emergency medical help right away

For more links on how to manage your symptoms go to [www.cancercare.on.ca/symptoms](http://www.cancercare.on.ca/symptoms).

The information set out in the medication information sheets, regimen information sheets, and symptom management information (for patients) contained in the Drug Formulary (the "Formulary") is intended to be used by health professionals and patients for informational purposes only. The information is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions or side effects of a certain drug, nor should it be used to indicate that use of a particular drug is safe, appropriate or effective for a given condition.

A patient should always consult a healthcare provider if he/she has any questions regarding the information set out in the Formulary. The information in the Formulary is not intended to act as or replace medical advice and should not be relied upon in any such regard. All uses of the Formulary are subject to clinical judgment and actual prescribing patterns may not follow the information provided in the Formulary.