

Medication Information Sheet

IDArubicin (eye-da-RUE-bi-sin)

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: Generic brand(s) available, Idamycin®

Appearance: Red coloured solution for injection

What is this medication for?

- For treating blood cancers such as acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL).

What should I do before I have this medication?

- Tell your doctor if you have or had significant medical condition(s), especially if you have or had heart problems, taken / taking drugs that can affect the heart, or have any allergies.
- People with cancer have a higher risk of getting other cancers or developing blood clots. Some cancer medications may increase these risks, especially if used for a long period of time. Discuss any concerns about this medication with your health care team.

Remember to:

- Tell your health care team about all of the other medications you are taking.
- Keep taking other medications that have been prescribed for you, unless you have been told not to by your health care team.

You will have a blood test to check for hepatitis B before starting treatment. See the [Hepatitis B and Cancer Medications](#) pamphlet for more information.

How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Talk to your health care team about:

- How this medication may affect your sexual health.
- Symptoms of menopause such as hot flashes, vaginal dryness or changes in your mood, if this applies to you
- How this medication may affect your ability to have a baby, if this applies to you.

This medication may harm an unborn baby. Tell your health care team if you or your partner are pregnant, become pregnant during treatment, or are breastfeeding.

- If there is **any** chance you may become pregnant, you and your partner together must use **2 effective forms of birth control** at the same time until at least **6.5 months** after your last dose. Talk to your health care team about which birth control options are best for you.
- If you are a patient that can get somebody pregnant, you and your partner together must use **2 effective forms of birth control** at the same time until at least **3.5 months** after your last dose. Talk to your health care team about which birth control options are best for you.
- Do not breastfeed while on this medication and until **14 days** after your last dose.

How is this medication given?

- This drug is given by injection 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 or fever:**
 - If you feel unwell, take your temperature before taking any medications for pain or fever. They may hide a fever.
 - You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) tablets. Ask your health care team about the right dose for you.

- Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid, ASA), including low dose aspirin for heart conditions, may increase your chance of bleeding. Talk to your health care team before you start or stop these medications.
- **Talk to 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.
- Drinking alcohol and smoking during your treatment may increase some side effects and make your medication less effective. Speak to your health care team about smoking and drinking alcohol while on treatment.

What are the side effects of this medication?

Common side effects usually occur in more than 1 out of every 10 patients. Other side effects are less common, but may be severe. You may not have all of the side effects below. You may have side effects that are not listed.

More Common Side Effects	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p><i>Hair thinning or loss</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a gentle soft brush; care should be taken with hair sprays, bleaches, dyes and perms. • Your hair usually grows back after your treatment ends, but the texture or colour may change. 	Talk to your health care team if this bothers you
<p><i>Unusual bleeding or bruising</i> (black stools, coughing up blood, purple or red dots on skin, bleeding that will not stop)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May occur in days to weeks after your dose is given/ after treatment starts • Use a soft toothbrush. Be careful not to cut or bruise yourself. • Check with your doctor before any surgery or dental work. • Use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) for fever, mild headache, aches or pains. • Talk to your doctor first before using other drugs such as ibuprofen (Advil®) or naproxen Aleve®) or aspirin, since they may increase bleeding risk. If taking aspirin regularly, talk to your doctor before you stop taking it. • Also see Low Platelets pamphlet.* 	Get emergency medical help right away

More Common Side Effects	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p><i>Fever, chills, infection</i></p> <p>You have a fever if your temperature taken in your mouth (oral temperature) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38.3°C (100.9°F) or higher at any time OR • 38.0°C (100.4°F) or higher for at least one hour. <p>While you are getting chemotherapy treatments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a digital thermometer at home and take your temperature if you feel hot or unwell (for example, chills). • 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. • Do not eat or drink anything hot or cold right before taking your temperature. • Wash your hands often. • Check with your doctor before getting any vaccines, surgeries or visiting your dentist. <p>If you have a fever, talk to your health care team or go to the closest emergency room.</p> <p>See our Neutropenia (Low white blood cell count) pamphlet for more information.</p>	<p>Get emergency medical help right away</p>
<p><i>Mouth sores</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain good mouth hygiene. Regular teethbrushing with a soft toothbrush or Toothette®, and regular use of mouthwashes, especially after meals and at bedtime. Use alcohol-free mouthwashes. • Instead, try a homemade mouthwash: Mix 1 teaspoonful of baking soda and 1 teaspoonful of salt in 4 cups (1L) of water. • Avoid hot, spicy, acidic, hard or crunchy foods. • Check with your doctor or nurse as soon as you notice sores in mouth/lips or pain with swallowing. Your doctor may prescribe a prescription mouthwash to relieve mouth sores and prevent infection. • Also see Mouth Care pamphlet.* 	<p>Contact your health care team as soon as possible (office hours)</p>
<p><i>Nausea and vomiting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May occur in hours to days after the dose is given/ after treatment starts. • Drink clear fluids and avoid large meals. Get fresh air and rest. • Limit spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell. 	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>

More Common Side Effects	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take anti-nausea drug(s) exactly as directed by your doctor. It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it. Contact your doctor if nausea lasts more than 1 day or if any vomiting occurs. Also see Nausea & Vomiting pamphlet.* 	
Change in urine colour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red-orange urine for 1-2 days after receiving drug. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe

Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Liver problems (yellow skin or eyes, dark urine)	Get emergency medical help right away
Allergic reaction (fever, severe rash, itchiness, swollen face, lip or tongue, chest or throat tightness) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May occur during or shortly after the drug is given. 	Get emergency medical help right away
Diarrhea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May occur days to weeks after the drug is given / after treatment starts Drink plenty of clear fluids. Limit hot, spicy, fried foods, foods/drinks with caffeine, orange or prune juice. Try a low-fiber BRAT diet (Bananas, white Rice, Apple sauce, Toast made with white bread). Take anti-diarrhea drug(s) if given to you by your doctor. Also see Diarrhea pamphlet.* 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
Heart problems (irregular heartbeat, chest pain, fainting, swelling, shortness of breath)	Get emergency medical help right away
Rapid killing of cancer cells when you start treatment may lead to build up of cell waste products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If mild, this may cause gout, with joint pains, but if severe, may cause fevers, kidney failure, confusion and be life-threatening. 	Get emergency medical help right away

Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You MUST take the preventive medicines given by your doctor AND Drink plenty of fluids (6-8 glasses per day) and void (urinate) frequently. 	
Reactions at the injection site (pain, burning, redness or swelling on skin where drug was injected) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let your healthcare team know right away when this happens, since this drug can harm or irritate tissues if it leaks from the vein during injection. 	Get emergency medical help right away
Redness/rash in areas where you've previously received radiation	Get emergency medical help right away
Rash (may be severe); dry, itchy skin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay out of the sun; wear sunblock, a hat and cover exposed skin. Use daily moisturizer. If severe, get medical help right away. 	Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe
Infection of the intestines	Get emergency medical help right away
Blood clot (limb pain or swelling, hardened vein in limb), may occur in lungs (sudden start of coughing, breathing problems, chest pain, coughing blood)	Get emergency medical help right away

Who do I contact if I have questions or need help?

My cancer health care provider is: _____

During the day I should contact: _____

Evenings, weekends and holidays: _____

Other Notes:

October 2023 Updated " How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding" section

For more links on how to manage your symptoms go to www.cancercareontario.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.