

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 Patients

Protocol: Topotecan (Hycamtin™)

Date: February 2004

Revision: November 2015

MEDICATION	ADMINISTRATION
Topotecan	Intravenously over 30 minutes daily for 5 days
<i>Treatment repeated every 3 weeks</i>	

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General Information associated with your treatment

- ❑ Topotecan is used to prevent the multiplication of abnormal cells and destroy them.
- ❑ A **blood test** will be done prior to every treatment cycle. Depending on its results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of medication might be adjusted or 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.
- ❑ You can have an **active sexual** life during your treatments. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur on a temporary basis during this period. This may also be influenced by different factors (fatigue, stress etc.).
- ❑ Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- ❑ Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with herbs or lemon juice. Eating fruits, 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.
- ❑ In **pre-menopausal female patients**, chemotherapy may cause irregularities or cessation of the menstrual cycle during treatments. The menstrual cycle, after stopping chemotherapy, may restart or return to normal. It may also stop permanently. However, a pregnancy may be possible and a method of **contraception** is strongly recommended during treatments. Chemotherapy administered during pregnancy may harm the embryo. Breast-feeding is contra-indicated during treatment.
- ❑ Consult your doctor or pharmacist before you take other medications (even over the counter medications available without a prescription) or natural products. 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 body fluids (for example urine, stools) in order to protect the environment and your relatives.
- ❑ Be sure to always have at hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to you doctor and your pharmacist. It is important to make them aware of any change.

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Adverse Effects and Management

ADVERSE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea, usually light, may occur during the week of treatment and continue for a few days after the end of the treatment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before your treatment, medication to prevent nausea may be prescribed. At home, you may also have to take medication for 1 or 2 days or more, as needed.• Communicate with your doctor or pharmacist if your medication does not relieve your nausea.
<p>Depending on the individual, a thinning or partial hair loss may occur. In general, this happens 2 to 3 weeks after the beginning of your treatment. However, don't worry; your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use gentle shampoo.• Avoid brushing hair vigorously.• Avoid hair spray, dyes and perms.
<p>A decrease of the white blood cells will occur 1 to 2 weeks after the beginning of your treatment. You may be at higher risk to contact infections during this period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash your hands often.• During this period, avoid coming into contact with people who have contagious diseases.• Quickly contact a member of your healthcare team if you notice any signs of infection (fever, chills, cough, sore throat, pain while urinating...).• 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.• In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (ex.: Tylenol[®], Atasol[®]) and anti-inflammatory medication (ex.: Motrin[®], Advil[®]).

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A decrease of the platelets will occur 2 weeks after the beginning of your treatment. You may 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.• Consult us if you bruise more easily than you normally do or if you have a tendency to bleed easily from the nose or the gums.
You may experience a decrease of red blood cells following your treatment. This phenomenon is called anemia and is characterised 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 us.
Fever may occur within a few minutes or a few hours following your treatment. This should not last more than 24 hours after the last day of treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notify your pharmacist if these symptoms occur. Some measures can be recommended

Pharmacist: _____

Phone: _____

From ____ h to ____ h (Monday to Friday)