

Medication Information Sheet

bortezomib (bore-THE-zo-mib)

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: Velcade®

Appearance: Colourless solution

What is this medication for?

For treating patients with multiple myeloma and certain types of lymphomas.

What should I do before I have this medication?

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you have/had significant medical condition(s), especially if you have / had:
 - ◊ Kidney, liver, lung or heart problems
 - ◊ High or low blood pressure
 - ◊ Bleeding problems
 - ◊ Problems with nerves in hands and feet (numbness or tingling), or
 - ◊ any allergies.

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.

How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- The use of this medication in men or women may cause harm to the unborn baby if pregnancy occurs. Let your health care team know if you or your partner is pregnant, becomes pregnant during treatment, or if you are breastfeeding

- 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 **3 months** after the last dose. Discuss with your healthcare team.
- Do not breastfeed while taking this drug.
- Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant.
- This medication may affect fertility (ability to get pregnant).

How is this medication given?

- This drug is injected under the skin, or given into a vein over a few seconds.
- Talk to your health care team about your treatment schedule.
- A minimum gap of 72 hours between doses is required to avoid severe side effects.
- If you miss your treatment appointment, talk to your health care team to find out what to do.

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

- Do not eat or drink grapefruit, starfruit, Seville oranges or their juices (or products that contain these) while on this treatment. They may increase side effects.
- 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.

- If you are taking antidiabetic or steroid medications by mouth, monitor your blood sugar regularly since bortezomib may cause changes in your blood sugar levels.
- Green tea and vitamin C supplements have been shown to affect how bortezomib works. Avoid green tea and any drinks or foods that contain green tea during your entire bortezomib treatment. Talk with your cancer health care team before taking any vitamin C supplements.
- Exercise caution when driving or operating dangerous machinery while you are taking this drug as it can cause tiredness, dizziness, fainting or blurred vision.
- 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?

The following table lists side effects that you may have when getting bortezomib. The table is set up to list the most common side effects first and the least common last.

It is unlikely that you will have all of the side effects listed and you may have some that are not listed. Read over the side effect table so that you know what to look for and when to get help. Keep this paper during your treatment so that you can refer to it if you need to.

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Fatigue</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling of tiredness or low energy that lasts a long time and does not go away with rest or sleep. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active. Aim to get 30 minutes of moderate exercise (you are able to talk comfortably while exercising) on most days. • Check with your health care team before starting any new exercise. • Pace yourself, do not rush. Put off less important activities. Rest when you need to. • Ask family or friends to help you with things like housework, shopping, and child or pet care. • Eat well and drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water or other liquids every day (unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less). 	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid driving or using machinery if you are feeling tired. <p>Ask your health care team for the Fatigue pamphlet for more information.</p>	
<p>Diarrhea</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loose, watery, unformed stool (poo) that may happen days to weeks after you get your treatment. <p>What to do?</p> <p>If you have diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take anti-diarrhea medication if your health care team prescribed it or told you to take it. Do not eat foods or drinks with artificial sweetener (like chewing gum or 'diet' drinks), coffee and alcohol. Eat many small meals and snacks instead of 2 or 3 large meals. Drink at least 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day, unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. Talk to your health care team if you can't drink 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day when you have diarrhea. You may need to drink special liquids with salt and sugar, called Oral Rehydration Therapy. Talk to your health care team if your diarrhea does not improve after 24 hours of taking diarrhea medication or if you have diarrhea more than 7 times in one day. <p>Ask your health care team for the Diarrhea pamphlet for more information.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if no improvement after 24 hours of taking diarrhea medication or if severe (more than 7 times in one day)</p>
<p>Nausea and vomiting</p> <p>(Generally mild)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nausea is feeling like you need to throw up. You may also feel light-headed. You may feel nausea within hours to days after your treatment. <p>What to do?</p> <p>To help prevent nausea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it happens. 	<p>Talk to your health care team if nausea lasts more than 48 hours or vomiting lasts more than 24 hours or if severe</p>

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your anti-nausea medication(s) as prescribed, even if you do not feel like throwing up. • Drink clear liquids and have small meals. Get fresh air and rest. • Do not eat spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell. • Limit caffeine (like coffee, tea) and avoid alcohol. <p>If you have nausea or vomiting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your rescue (as-needed) anti-nausea medication(s) as prescribed. • Ask your health care team for the Nausea & Vomiting pamphlet for more information. • Talk to your health care team if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ nausea lasts more than 48 hours ◦ vomiting lasts more than 24 hours or if it is severe 	

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Constipation</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having bowel movements (going poo) less often than normal. • Small hard stools (poo) that look like pellets. • The need to push hard and strain to have any stool (poo) come out. • Stomach ache or cramps. • A bloated belly, feeling of fullness, or discomfort. • Leaking of watery stools (poo). • Lots of gas or burping. • Nausea or vomiting. <p>What to do?</p> <p>To help prevent constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to eat more fiber rich foods like fruits with skin, leafy greens and whole grains. 	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink at least 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. • Be Active. Exercise can help to keep you regular. • If you take opioid pain medication, ask your health care team if eating more fibre is right for you. <p>To help treat constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have not had a bowel movement in 2 to 3 days you may need to take a laxative (medication to help you poo) to help you have regular bowel movements. Ask your health care team what to do. <p>Ask your health care team for the Constipation Pamphlet for more information.</p>	
<p>Neuropathy (Tingling, numb toes or fingers)</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbness or tingling of your fingers and toes may happen after starting your treatment. • Sometimes it can be painful and feel like burning sensation, which may be severe. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your health care team if you have symptoms of neuropathy. • Numbness and tingling may slowly get better after your treatment ends. <p>In rare cases, it may continue long after treatment ends. If you continue to have bothersome symptoms, talk to your health care team for advice.</p>	Talk to your health care team, especially if you have trouble doing tasks like doing up buttons, writing, moving, severe pain or numbness
<p>Fever, chills, shivering (less common)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have a fever or chills without any signs of infection, such as a sore throat, cough or skin rash. • Symptoms may happen at any time after you receive your treatment and usually go away as your body gets used to the medication. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak to your health care team if these feelings bother you. 	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your temperature to see if you have a fever. • If you do have a fever, try to speak to your health care team. If you are unable to talk to them for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away. 	
<p>Low neutrophils (white blood cells) in the blood (neutropenia)</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>When neutrophils are low, you are at risk of getting an infection more easily. Ask your health care team for the Neutropenia (Low white blood cell count) pamphlet for more information.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you feel hot or unwell (for example if you have chills or a new cough), you must check your temperature to see if you have a fever. • Do not take medications that treat a fever before you take your temperature (for example, Tylenol®, acetaminophen, Advil® or ibuprofen). • Do not eat or drink anything hot or cold right before taking your temperature. <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>What to do?</p> <p>If your health care team has told you that you have low neutrophils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often to prevent infection. • Check with your health care team before getting any vaccines, surgeries, medical procedures or visiting your dentist. • Keep a digital thermometer at home so you can easily check for a fever. <p>If you have a fever:</p> <p>If you have a fever, try to contact your health care team. If you are unable to talk to the team for advice, you must get emergency medical help right away.</p>	<p>If you have a fever, try to contact your health care team. If you are unable to talk to the team for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away.</p>

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Low platelets in the blood</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>When your platelets are low, you are at risk for bleeding and bruising. Ask your health care team for the Low Platelet Count pamphlet for more information.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for signs of bleeding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ bleeding from your gums ◦ unusual or heavy nosebleeds ◦ bruising easily or more than normal ◦ black coloured stools (poo) or blood in your stools (poo) ◦ coughing up red or brown coloured mucus ◦ dizziness, constant headache or changes in your vision ◦ heavy vaginal bleeding ◦ red or pink coloured urine (pee) <p>What to do?</p> <p>If your health care team has told you that you have low platelets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your pharmacist that your platelet count may be low before taking any prescriptions or over-the-counter medication. • Check with your healthcare team before you go to the dentist. • Take care of your mouth and use a soft toothbrush. • Try to prevent cuts and bruises. • Ask your health care team what activities are safe for you. • Your treatment may have to be delayed if you have low platelets. Your health care team may recommend a blood transfusion. <p>If you have signs of bleeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have a small bleed, clean the area with soap and water or a saline (saltwater) rinse. Apply pressure for at least 10 minutes. <p>If you have bleeding that does not stop or is severe (very heavy), you must get emergency medical help right away.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if you have any signs of bleeding. If you have bleeding that doesn't stop or is severe (very heavy), you MUST get emergency help right away.</p>

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Low appetite</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of interest in food or not feeling hungry. • Weight loss. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to eat your favourite foods. • Eat small meals throughout the day. • You may need to take meal supplements to help keep your weight up. • Talk to your health care team if you have no appetite. <p>Ask your health care team for the Loss of Appetite pamphlet for more information.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>
<p>Headache; mild joint, muscle pain or cramps</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New pain in your muscles or joints, muscle cramps, or feeling achy. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take pain medication (acetaminophen or opioids such as codeine, morphine, hydromorphone, oxycodone) as prescribed. • Talk to your health care team before you start taking Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or ASA (Aspirin®), as they may hide an infection that needs treatment or they may increase your risk of bleeding. <p>Ask your health care team for the Pain pamphlet for more information.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>
<p>Cough and feeling short of breath</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have a cough and feel short of breath. • Symptoms that commonly occur with a cough are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ Wheezing or a whistling breathing ◊ Runny nose ◊ Sore throat ◊ Heartburn 	<p>Talk to your health care team. If you are not able to talk to your health care team for advice, and you have a fever or severe symptoms, you MUST get emergency medical help right away</p>

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Weight loss ◦ Fever and chills • Rarely this may be severe with chest pain, trouble breathing or coughing up blood. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your temperature to see if you have a fever. • If you have a fever, try to talk to your health care team. If you are not able to talk to them for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away. • If you have a severe cough with chest pain, trouble breathing or you are coughing up blood, get medical help right away. 	

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Rash; dry, itchy skin</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have cracked, rough, flaking or peeling areas of the skin. • Your skin may look red and feel warm, like a sunburn. • Your skin may itch, burn, sting or feel very tender when touched. <p>What to do?</p> <p>To prevent and treat dry skin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use fragrance-free skin moisturizer. • Protect your skin from the sun and the cold. • Use sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection and a SPF of at least 30. • Avoid perfumed products and lotions that contain alcohol. • Drink 6 to 8 cups of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated liquids each day, unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. <p>Rash may be severe in some rare cases and cause your skin to blister or peel. If this happens, get emergency medical help right away.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Trouble Sleeping</p> <p>Your medications may cause trouble sleeping. It may get better once your body gets used to the medication or when your treatment ends.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may find it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep. • How well you sleep may change over your treatment. For example, you may have several nights of poor sleep followed by a night of better sleep. • You may wake up too early or not feel well-rested after a night's sleep. • You may feel tired or sleepy during the day. <p>What to do?</p> <p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>
<p>Mild swelling</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have mild swelling or puffiness in your arms and/or legs. Rarely, this may be severe. <p>What to do?</p> <p>To help prevent swelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat a low-salt diet. <p>If you have swelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear loose-fitting clothing. • For swollen legs or feet, keep your feet up when sitting. 	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>
<p>Pains or cramps in the belly</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or cramps in your belly. • Constipation and diarrhea can cause pain in your belly. 	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the pain is severe, gets worse or doesn't go away, talk to your health care team about other possible causes. 	
<p>Low blood pressure (may be severe); Dizziness</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may feel tired, dizzy or light-headed. • You may have nausea (feeling like you need to throw up), vomiting or blurred vision. • You may faint (pass out). <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your blood pressure often. Talk to your health care team to find out what a safe blood pressure is for you. • If you feel dizzy or unwell lay down right away so that you do not fall. Try to get up and move slowly only once you feel better. • Do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery if you feel dizzy. • Your blood pressure may drop when the medication is being given to you. Let your health care team know right away if you start to feel dizzy or lightheaded. 	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe
<p>Too much or too little salt in your body</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle spasms, cramping, weakness, twitching, or convulsions. • Irregular heartbeat, confusion or blood pressure changes. <p>What to do?</p> <p>Get emergency medical help right away for severe symptoms.</p>	Get emergency medical help right away for severe symptoms
<p>Eye problems</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your eyes may feel dry, irritated, or painful. • They may look red and have a lot of tears. • They may feel sensitive to light and your vision may be blurry. 	Talk to your health care team as soon as possible

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid wearing contact lenses. • Wear sunglasses with UV protection. • Use protective eyewear (goggles or helmet with face mask) when playing sports, mowing the lawn or doing anything that may get particles or fumes in your eyes. • You may try artificial tears (eye drops) or ointment. 	
<p>Heartburn; stomach upset; bloating</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or burning in the middle or top part of your chest. It may get worse when you are lying down or bending over or when you swallow. • A bitter or acidic taste in your mouth. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink clear liquids and eat small meals. • Do not eat acidic, fatty or spicy foods. • Limit caffeine (like coffee, tea) and avoid alcohol. • Avoid smoking or being around tobacco. • Sit up or stand after eating. Do not lie down. • Raise the head of your bed six to eight inches. You may need to use extra pillows to do this. 	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>

Other rare, but serious side effects are possible.

If you experience ANY of the following, speak to your cancer health care provider or get emergency medical help right away:

- Irregular heartbeat, fainting, or swelling in legs/ankles/belly
- Suggest Pain or swelling or hardened vein in your arms or legs
- Sudden loss of vision, speech, or the use of your limb(s) or chest pain, shortness of breath), or pain in belly or limb
- Severe headache, seizures, confusion
- Swollen face, lip or tongue, chest or throat tightness
- Severe/sudden belly pain or stomach area, bloating, severe constipation
- Tender right side of belly, yellowish skin or eyes, dark urine

- Increased pain in centre of belly and may extend to the back, appetite or weight loss
- Symptoms of gout such as joint pains; lower back pain, body swelling, passing little or no urine, or recent unusual weight gain

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:

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.