

Medication Information Sheet

vinCRISStine

 (Vin-KRIST-een)

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: Oncovin®

Appearance: clear, colourless solution; may be mixed into larger bags for injection

What is this medication for?

- For treating leukemia, lymphoma, sarcoma, and less often in other cancers, usually in combination with other drugs.

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 liver problems, nerve problems (numbness/tingling in your fingers and toes), or any allergies.
- People who have cancer or leukemia are at a higher risk of developing other cancers/leukemias (usually some years later) or blood clots. Some cancer medications may increase these risks, especially if used for a prolonged period of time. You should discuss any concerns with your doctor.

How will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- Vincristine can harm the unborn baby and should not be used by pregnant women.
- 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.
- Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant.
- Do not breastfeed while on vincristine treatment.
- Effects on Fertility: Probable
- Effects on Fertility: Probable

How is this medication given?

- This drug is only given by injection into a vein.

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.

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?
More Common Side Effects	
<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. 	
<p><i>Constipation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat a balanced diet with fibres such whole grains, fruit and raw vegetables. • Drink plenty of fluids. Try light exercise regularly. • Speak to your doctor if no bowel movement for 3 or more days. • Also see Constipation Pamphlet.* 	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</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.
 January 2017

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
More Common Side Effects	
<p><i>Nausea and vomiting (usually mild)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink clear fluids and avoid large meals. Get fresh air and rest. • Limit spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell. • 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 48 hours or vomiting for more than 24 hours. • Also see Nausea & Vomiting pamphlet.* 	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>
<p><i>Tingling, numb toes or fingers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May slowly return to normal after treatment ends. • Contact your doctor or nurse if you have trouble doing up buttons, writing, picking up small objects, have pain, or trouble with movement. • Less common effects on the nerves in your head/face, leading to weakness or changes in senses such as hearing -- Contact your doctor if these occur. 	<p>Contact your health care team if no improvement or if severe</p>

Side effects and what to do	When to contact doctor?
Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe	
<p><i>Lung problems</i> (sudden increased cough, breathing problems, chest pain, coughing blood)</p>	<p>Get emergency medical help right away</p>
<p><i>Rupture in stomach or intestine wall</i> (Sudden, severe pain in belly or stomach area)</p>	<p>Get emergency medical help right away</p>
<p><i>Hearing problems or loss</i></p>	<p>Contact your health care team as soon as possible</p>
<p><i>Allergic reaction</i> (fever, severe rash, itchiness, swollen face, lip or tongue, chest or throat tightness; may occur during or shortly after the drug is given)</p>	<p>Get emergency medical help right away</p>
<p><i>Unusual bleeding or bruising</i></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>Get emergency medical help right away</p>

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Less Common Side Effects, but may be Severe	
<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><i>Pain, burning, redness, or swelling on skin where drug was injected</i></p> <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. 	
<p><i>Low measured salt levels in your blood which may lead to mild confusion or swelling</i></p>	Get emergency medical help right away
<p><i>Rapid killing of cancer cells when you start treatment may lead to build up of cell waste products</i></p> <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. • You MUST take the preventive medicines given by your doctor AND • Drink plenty of fluids (6-8 glasses per day) and void (urinate) frequently. 	Get emergency medical help right away

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