

UPMC | HILLMAN CANCER CENTER

Bendamustine (Treanda®, Bendeka®)

About This Drug

Bendamustine is used to treat cancer. It is given in the vein (IV).

Possible Side Effects

- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Constipation (not able to move bowels)
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Soreness of the mouth and throat. You may have red areas, white patches, or sores that hurt.
- Decreased appetite
- Cough, trouble breathing
- Headache
- Weight loss
- Rash
- Increased total bilirubin in your blood. This may mean that you have changes in your liver function.
- Bone marrow suppression. This is a decrease in the number of white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This may raise your risk of infection, make you tired and weak (fatigue), and raise your risk of bleeding.

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 15% or greater of patients treated with bendamustine. Not all possible side effects are included above.

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe bone marrow suppression and infections, which may be life-threatening.
- Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis are rare but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reaction to this drug may be swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. If this happens, do not take another dose of this drug. You should get urgent medical treatment.
- While you are getting this drug in your vein (IV), you may have a reaction to the drug. Sometimes you may be given medication to stop or lessen these side effects. Your nurse will check you closely

for these signs: fever or shaking chills, flushing, facial swelling, feeling dizzy, headache, trouble breathing, rash, itching, chest tightness, or chest pain. **These reactions may happen after your infusion. If this happens, call 911 for emergency care**

- Skin and tissue irritation may involve redness, pain, warmth, or swelling at the IV site. This happens if the drug leaks out of the vein and into nearby tissue.
- Tumor lysis syndrome: This drug may act on the cancer cells very quickly. This may affect how your kidneys work.
- Severe allergic skin reaction, which may be life-threatening. You may develop blisters on your skin that are filled with fluid or a severe red rash all over your body that may be painful.
- Changes in your liver function, which may be life-threatening
- This drug may raise your risk of getting a second cancer such as leukemia

Note: *Some of the side effects above are very rare. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.*

Important Information

- This drug may be present in the saliva, tears, sweat, urine, stool, vomit, semen, and vaginal secretions. Talk to your doctor and/or your nurse about the necessary precautions to take during this time.

Treating Side Effects

- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- To decrease your risk of infections, wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid close contact with people who have a cold, the flu, or other infections.
- To decrease your risk of bleeding, use a soft toothbrush. Check with your nurse before using dental floss.
- Be very careful when using knives or tools.
- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about medicines that are available to help stop or lessen constipation.
- If you are not able to move your bowels, check with your doctor or nurse before you use enemas, laxatives, or suppositories.
- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- If you throw up or have loose bowel movements, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid).
- If you get diarrhea, eat low-fiber foods that are high in protein and calories and avoid foods that can irritate your digestive tracts or lead to cramping.
- Ask your nurse or doctor about medicine that can lessen or stop your diarrhea.
- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your nurse or doctor about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help or stop lessen these symptoms.

- Mouth care is very important. Your mouth care should consist of routine, gentle cleaning of your teeth or dentures and rinsing your mouth with a mixture of 1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of water or 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda in 8 ounces of water. This should be done at least after each meal and at bedtime.
- If you have mouth sores, avoid mouthwash that has alcohol. Also avoid alcohol and smoking because they can bother your mouth and throat.
- Infusion reactions may happen after your infusion. If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.
- To help with weight loss, drink fluids that contribute calories (whole milk, juice, soft drinks, sweetened beverages, milkshakes, and nutritional supplements) instead of water.
- Include a source of protein at every meal and snack, such as meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, tofu, eggs, nuts, milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, pudding, and nutritional supplements
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry. Ask your doctor for medicine if your rash bothers you

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of bendamustine with food.
- This drug may interact with other medicines. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs and others) that you are taking at this time.
- The safety and use of dietary supplements and alternative diets are often not known. Using these might affect your cancer or interfere with your treatment. Until more is known, you should not use dietary supplements or alternative diets without your cancer doctor's help.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.5 F (38 C) or higher
- Chills
- Fatigue that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- You cough up yellow, green, or bloody mucus
- Wheezing or trouble breathing
- Headache that does not go away
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- No bowel movement in 3 days or when you feel uncomfortable.
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- Pain in your mouth or throat that makes it hard to eat or drink
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day

- Lasting loss of appetite or rapid weight loss of five pounds in a week
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and fatigue (low energy, feeling weak)
- A new rash or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Signs of allergic reaction: swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way.
- Signs of infusion reaction: fever or shaking chills, flushing, facial swelling, feeling dizzy, headache, trouble breathing, rash, itching, chest tightness, or chest pain.
- While you are getting this drug, please tell your nurse right away if you have any pain, redness, or swelling at the site of the IV infusion
- Signs of possible liver problems: dark urine, pale bowel movements, bad stomach pain, feeling very tired and weak, unusual itching, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- Signs of tumor lysis: Confusion or agitation, decreased urine, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, muscle cramping, numbness and/or tingling, seizures
- If you think you may be pregnant, or may have impregnated your partner

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This drug can have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of child bearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment and for at least 3 months after treatment. Men with female partners of child bearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment and for at least 3 months after your cancer treatment. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** It is not known if this drug passes into breast milk. For this reason, women should talk to their doctor about the risks and benefits of breastfeeding during treatment with this drug because this drug may enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** In men this drug may affect your ability to have children in the future. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm banking.

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