

Cladribine (Leustatin)

About This Drug

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

Possible Side Effects

- 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, and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Infection
- Headache
- Fever
- Tiredness
- Nausea
- Rash
- Injection site reaction - you may get a rash, swelling or bruising or your skin may get red, warm, itchy, or painful at the site of your infusion.

Note: *Not all possible side effects are included above.*

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe muscle weakness in your arms and/or legs that can be irreversible.
- Effects on the nerves called peripheral neuropathy. You may feel numbness, tingling, or pain in your hands and feet. It may be hard for you to button your clothes, open jars, or walk as usual. The effect on the nerves may get worse with more doses of the drug. These effects get better in some people after the drug is stopped but it does not get better in all people.
- Severe bone marrow suppression
- Neutropenic fever. A type of fever that can develop when you have a very low number of white blood cells which can be life-threatening.
- Risk of severe and life-threatening infections
- Tumor lysis syndrome: This drug may act on the cancer cells very quickly. This may affect how your kidneys work.

- Changes in your kidney function

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.
- Talk to your doctor before receiving any vaccinations during your treatment. Some vaccinations are not recommended while receiving cladribine.

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 the risk of infection, wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid close contact with people who have a cold, the flu, or other infections.
- Take your temperature as your doctor or nurse tells you, and whenever you feel like you may have a fever.
- To help decrease the 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.
- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- To help with nausea, 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 stop or lessen these symptoms.
- 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.
- If you have numbness and tingling in your hands and feet, be careful when cooking, walking, and handling sharp objects and hot liquids.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of cladribine with food.
- This drug may interact with other medicines. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) that you are taking at this time. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before



starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.

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 100.4° F (38° C) or higher
- Chills
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Headache that does not go away
- Weakness or lack of strength to your arms and/or legs
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing
- Coughing up yellow, green, or bloody mucus
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Decreased or very dark urine
- Signs of tumor lysis: confusion or agitation, decreased urine, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, muscle cramping, numbness and/or tingling, seizures.
- Numbness, tingling, or pain in your hands and feet
- While you are getting this drug, please tell your nurse right away if you get a rash, swelling or bruising or if your skin gets red, warm, itchy or painful at the site of the IV infusion.
- A new rash or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- If you think you may be pregnant

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This drug can have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant.
- **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:** Fertility studies have not been done with this drug. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.

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