

Dacarbazine

About This Drug

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

Possible Side Effects

- Nausea and throwing up (vomiting)
- Decreased appetite (decreased hunger)

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 90% or greater of patients treated with dacarbazine. Not all possible side effects are included above.

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe bone marrow suppression which can be life-threatening. 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.
- Changes in your liver function, which can cause liver failure and 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.**
- 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. Further skin and tissue irritation can occur if the drug leaks out of the vein and into the nearby tissue. Very rarely it may cause local tissue necrosis (tissue death).

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

- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- If you throw up, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid).
- 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 stop or lessen these symptoms.
- To help with decreased appetite, eat foods high in calories and protein, such as meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, tofu, eggs, nuts, milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, pudding, and nutritional supplements.
- Consider using sauces and spices to increase taste. Daily exercise, with your doctor's approval, may increase your appetite.
- 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.

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of dacarbazine with food.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all other prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) you are taking before starting this medicine as there are known drug interactions with dacarbazine. 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
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- 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
- Signs of possible liver problems: dark urine, pale bowel movements, pain in your abdomen, feeling very tired and weak, unusual itching, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- 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. **If this happens call 911 for emergency care.**
- 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.
- If you think you may be pregnant

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This drug can have harmful effects on the unborn baby. For this reason, be sure to talk with your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while receiving this drug. 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:** 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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