

Ifosfamide (Ifex)

About This Drug

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

Possible Side Effects

- Decrease in the number of white blood cells. This may raise your risk of infection
- Decrease in red blood cells. This may make you feel more tired.
- Nausea and throwing up (vomiting)
- Infection
- Changes in your central nervous system can happen. The central nervous system is made up of your brain and spinal cord. You could feel extreme tiredness, agitation, confusion, have hallucinations (see or hear things that are not there), have trouble understanding or speaking, loss of control of your bowels or bladder, eyesight changes, numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body, seizures or coma. **If you start to have any of these symptoms let your doctor know right away.**
- Blood in your urine
- Hair loss. Hair loss is often temporary, although with certain medicine, hair loss can sometimes be permanent. Hair loss may happen suddenly or gradually. If you lose hair, you may lose it from your head, face, armpits, pubic area, chest, and/or legs. You may also notice your hair getting thin.

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 10% or greater of patients treated with Ifosfamide. Not all possible side effects are included above.

Warnings and Precautions

- 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.
- Severe changes in your central nervous system which can be life-threatening
- Effects on the bladder. This drug may cause irritation and bleeding in the bladder. You may have blood in your urine.
- Changes in your kidney function, which can cause kidney failure and be life-threatening
- Changes in the tissue of the heart which can be life-threatening. Some changes may happen that can cause your heart to have less ability to pump blood.

- Changes in your liver function and blockage of small veins in the liver, which can cause liver failure and be life-threatening.
- Thickening and/or inflammation (swelling) of the lung tissues which can be life-threatening. You may have a dry cough or trouble breathing.
- This drug may raise your risk of getting a second cancer.
- 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.**
- In women, menstrual bleeding may become irregular or stop while you are getting this drug. Do not assume that you cannot become pregnant if you do not have a menstrual period.
- Slow wound healing
- These side effects may be more severe if you are receiving high doses of this medication included in pre-transplant chemotherapy.

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.
- Ifosfamide may cause slow wound healing. If you must have emergency surgery or have an accident that results in a wound, tell the doctor that you are on ifosfamide.

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.
- To help with hair loss, wash with a mild shampoo and avoid washing your hair every day.
- Avoid rubbing your scalp, pat your hair or scalp dry.
- Avoid coloring your hair.
- Limit your use of hair spray, electric curlers, blow dryers, and curling irons.



- If you are interested in getting a wig, talk to your nurse. You can also call the American Cancer Society at 800-ACS-2345 to find out information about the “Look Good, Feel Better” program close to where you live. It is a free program where women getting chemotherapy can learn about wigs, turbans and scarves as well as makeup techniques and skin and nail care.
- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended). You may need to drink more to prevent effects on the bladder. Talk to your doctor and/or nurse for specific instructions.
- 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).
- 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.

Food and Drug Interactions

- Avoid grapefruit or grapefruit juice while taking this medicine. Grapefruit and grapefruit juice may raise the levels of ifosfamide in your body. This could make side effects worse.
- 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 ifosfamide. 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. Avoid the use of St. John’s Wort while taking ifosfamide as this may lower the levels of the drug in your body, which can make it less effective.

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
- Confusion and/or agitation
- Symptoms of a seizure such as confusion, blacking out, passing out, loss of hearing or vision, blurred vision, unusual smells or tastes (such as burning rubber), trouble talking, tremors or shaking in parts or all of the body, repeated body movements, tense muscles that do not relax, and loss of control of urine and bowels. **If you or your family member suspects you are having a seizure, call 911 right away.**
- Hallucinations
- Trouble understanding or speaking
- Blurry vision or changes in your eyesight
- Numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body
- Dry cough
- Trouble breathing
- Feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way (palpitations)
- Pain in your chest



- 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
- Pain when passing urine; blood in urine
- Decreased urine or difficulty urinating
- 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.**
- 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
- 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 childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment. Men with female partners of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment and for 6 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:** Women should not breastfeed during treatment because this drug could enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** In men and women both, 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 or egg banking.

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