

## Liposomal doxorubicin (Doxil)

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### About This Drug

Liposomal doxorubicin 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 (fatigue), and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Tiredness and weakness
- Fever
- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Constipation (unable to move bowels)
- Decreased appetite (decreased hunger)
- Soreness of the mouth and throat. You may have red areas, white patches, or sores that hurt.
- Hand-foot syndrome. The palms of your hands or soles of your feet may tingle, become numb, painful, swollen, or red.
- Rash

**Note:** Each of the side effects above was reported in 20% or greater of patients treated with liposomal doxorubicin. Not all possible side effects are included above.

### Warnings and Precautions

- While you are getting this drug in your vein (IV), you may have a reaction to the drug, which can be life-threatening. 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.**
- Changes in the tissue of the heart and/or congestive heart failure. You may be short of breath. Your arms, hands, legs and feet may swell.
- This drug may raise your risk of getting a second cancer, such as oral cancers.
- Hand- foot syndrome

**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.
- Urine color may turn slightly pink or red within a few hours after you get this drug. Urine should return to normal color within one to two days.
- Women may go through signs of menopause (change of life) like vaginal dryness or hot flashes.

## 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).
- 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 have 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 and/or constipation.
- If you are not able to move your bowels, check with your doctor or nurse before you use enemas, laxatives, or suppositories.
- 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.
- 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.
- To help with decreased appetite, eat small, frequent meals. 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.
- Avoid sun exposure and apply sunscreen routinely when outdoors.
- 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.
- To help with possible signs of early menopause, vaginal lubricants can be used to lessen vaginal dryness, itching, and pain during sexual relations.
- Infusion reactions may occur after your infusion. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**

## Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of liposomal doxorubicin 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
- Trouble breathing
- Tiredness or weakness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- 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
- Lasting loss of appetite or rapid weight loss of five pounds in a week
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- No bowel movement in 3 days or when you feel uncomfortable
- Swelling of legs, ankles, or feet
- Weight gain of 5 pounds in one week (fluid retention)
- Painful, red, or swollen areas on your hands or feet.
- Numbness and/or tingling of your hands and/or feet
- A new rash or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Signs of infusion reaction: fever or shaking chills, flushing, facial swelling, feeling dizzy, headache, trouble breathing, rash, itching, chest tightness, or chest pain. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**



- 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 and for 6 months after 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.
- 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.

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