

Lomustine (Gleostine®)

About This Drug

Lomustine is used to treat cancer. It is given orally (by mouth).

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.
- Blurred vision or other changes in eyesight
- Soreness of the mouth and throat. You may have red areas, white patches, or sores that hurt.
- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Changes in your liver function
- Extreme tiredness or feeling sleepy
- Changes in your kidney function
- Confusion
- 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: Not all possible side effects are included above.

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe bone marrow suppression
- Thickening and/or inflammation (swelling) of the lung tissues. You may have a dry cough or trouble breathing.
- This drug may raise your risk of getting a second cancer
- Severe changes in your liver function
- Severe changes in your kidney function which can cause kidney failure

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

How to Take Your Medication

- Swallow the medicine whole with or without food. Taking it on an empty stomach may help with nausea and vomiting. Do not break the capsules.
- This drug is usually taken a single dose that will not be repeated for at least 6 weeks. Each dose may be from different strengths and colors of capsules.
- **Missed dose:** If you vomit or miss a dose, contact your doctor right away for instructions.
- **Handling:** Wash your hands after handling your medicine, yourself and your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- If you get any of the content of a broken capsules on your skin, you should wash the area of the skin well with soap and water right away. Call your doctor if you get a skin reaction.
- 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.
- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the original container at room temperature.
- **Disposal of unused medicine:** Do not flush any expired and/or unused medicine down the toilet or drain unless you are specifically instructed to do so on the medication label. Some facilities have take-back programs and/or other options. If you do not have a take-back program in your area, then please discuss with your nurse or your doctor how to dispose of unused medicine.

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.
- 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.
- 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).
- 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.

- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.
- 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.

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of lomustine with food or other medications.
- 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 lomustine. 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
- Blurred vision or other changes in eyesight
- Confusion or agitation
- Pain in your chest
- Dry cough
- Trouble breathing
- 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 in your mouth or throat that makes it hard to eat or drink
- 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
- Decreased urine, or very dark urine
- Pain that does not go away, or is not relieved by prescribed medicines

- If you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This drug may have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment and for at least 2 weeks after treatment. Men with female partners of childbearing potential should use a condom during your cancer treatment and for at least 3.5 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 and for 2 weeks after 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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