

MEDICATION INFO SHEET

BLEOMYCIN **(blee-oh-MY-sin)**

Other Names for this Medication: Blenoxane® (Brand Names)

Appearance:

Injection: Clear, colourless liquid for injection into the bloodstream.

Why this Medication is Used:

Bleomycin is used in combination with other medications to treat many different types of cancer, such as Hodgkin's disease, lymphomas, head and neck cancers, or testicular cancer.

How do you take this Medication:

Injection: Your chemotherapy nurse will inject the medication into your bloodstream over a few minutes. You may be given a small test dose of Bleomycin on your first treatment day, to see how your body reacts to this medication.

Precautions:

- Your doctor will check your progress on a regular basis to check for unwanted effects. Chest x-rays may be done from time to time, to monitor effects on your lungs.
- It is very important to tell your doctor if you have medical problems with your kidney, liver or lung disease. Tell your doctor if you smoke.
- Tell your doctor or dentist before you have any type of surgery (including dental surgery) if you are receiving Bleomycin injections.
- Tell your doctor if you are taking the medications Phenytoin or Digoxin.
- Bleomycin may cause TEMPORARY hair loss in some people. Normal hair growth should return after treatment, although it may take several months.
- This chemotherapy should not be used if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. It is important to discuss birth control with your doctor (Note: birth control pills alone are not recommended as the only birth control method). Birth control should also be used by female partners, if you are a male taking this medication
- It is important to tell your doctor if you have chickenpox (or have recently been exposed to someone who has had chickenpox), shingles, kidney disease or liver disease. Any of these conditions could affect therapy with this medication.
- Due to increased risk of infection check with your doctor before having any vaccinations. Check with your doctor, before any surgery or dental work.
- Do not take ASA (*Aspirin*®, *acetylsalicylic acid*) without your doctor's knowledge and consent. For headache, fever, or occasional aches and pains, use *acetaminophen* (*Tylenol* ®) instead.
 - If a doctor has advised you to take ASA to prevent heart disease or stroke, please discuss this with your oncologist (cancer doctor) before starting treatment.
 - Many non-prescription medications contain ASA; always ask your pharmacist's advice when choosing a product.

For more information on this medication, please call your doctor, pharmacist or nurse,
or call the Cancer Information Service at 1-888-939-3333.

SIDE EFFECTS**PREVENTION****WHAT YOU SHOULD DO****MORE COMMON:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever and chills (often starting 2 to 6 hours after injection) • Cough, shortness of breath • Trouble breathing • Nausea, vomiting • Sores on the mouth and lips • Darkening or thickening of skin, rash, itching • Loss of appetite | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acetaminophen 325 mg (Tylenol®) 1 or 2 tablets may be taken before each injection and every 4-6 hours after, until fever and chills are gone. (max. 12 tablets/day) • Your doctor will take X-rays and check your lungs at regular clinic visits • Use anti-nausea medications as prescribed. • Maintain good mouth hygiene. Brush teeth often with a soft toothbrush. Avoid hot, spicy and acidic foods. • Your skin will return to normal a few months after the treatment has finished | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not reduced by Acetaminophen within 12 to 24 hours, contact your doctor IMMEDIATELY. • Contact your doctor as soon as possible. • Contact your doctor if your medication for nausea is not working. See Nausea and vomiting pamphlet. • Check with your doctor or nurse as soon as you notice sores on mouth or lips. See <i>Mouth Care</i> pamphlet. • Check with your doctor if these become troublesome. |
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LESS COMMON:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion, faintness, wheezing • Changes in fingernails • Tired, feeling of weakness • Weight loss • Hair loss (from head and body) • Sensitivity to sunlight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a high SPF sunscreen and protective clothing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your doctor IMMEDIATELY. • Tell your doctor or nurse if this bothers you. • A wig, hat, cap, scarf or hairpiece may be worn. |
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RARE:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden severe chest pain • Sudden weakness in arms and legs • Pain at tumour site • Swelling and pain in veins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with your doctor IMMEDIATELY. |
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