



For the Patient: GIRALT

Other Names: Palliative chemotherapy for metastatic colorectal cancer using Raltitrexed in patients with previous Fluorouracil toxicity.

GI = GastroIntestinal

RALT = Raltitrexed

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What is this drug used for?

- Raltitrexed is a drug given to treat cancer of the colon or rectum. It is given directly into the vein, or intravenously (IV).

How does this drug work?

- Raltitrexed works by interfering with dividing cells and preventing an increase in the number of cancer cells.

INTENDED BENEFITS

- This therapy is being given to destroy and/or limit the growth of cancer cells in your body. This treatment may improve your current symptoms, and delay the onset of new symptoms.
- It may take several treatments before your doctor can judge whether or not this treatment is helping.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

How is this drug given?

- You will receive one intravenous (IV) chemotherapy drug called Raltitrexed. It will be given to you at the clinic by a chemotherapy nurse. Each treatment will take **about 30 minutes**. Your first treatment will probably take longer, as the nurse will review information on the chemotherapy drug with you.
- The treatment is repeated every 3 weeks. This 3 week or 21-day period of time is called a "cycle". The cycle may be repeated up to 6 cycles, or longer if your body responds well to the drug, but may be changed depending on how the chemotherapy affects you.

The calendar on the following page outlines your overall treatment plan.

C Y C L E	DATE	TREATMENT PLAN
		▶ Week 1 → Raltitrexed IV x 1 day
	1	Week 2 → No Treatment
		Week 3 → No Treatment

C Y C L E	DATE	TREATMENT PLAN
		▶ Week 1 → Raltitrexed IV x 1 day
	2	Week 2 → No Treatment
		Week 3 → No Treatment

Treatment may continue for as long as you are benefitting from treatment and not having too many side effects.

What will happen when I get my drugs?

- A blood test is done each cycle, on or before the first day of each treatment cycle. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. The ones listed below are particularly important for you to know as they are directly related to the common actions of the drug in your treatment plan.

Your doctor will review the risks of treatment and possible side effects with you before starting treatment. The chemotherapy nurse will review possible side effects of the drug and how to manage those side effects.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
A flu-like illness may occur shortly after your treatment. You may have fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and joint aches. Flu-like symptoms usually disappear on their own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. • Fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer) which occurs more than 48 hours after treatment may be a sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor immediately.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur 2-3 days after your treatment. Some people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in the <i>Practical Tips to Help Manage Nausea*</i>
<p>Your white blood cells will decrease 1-2 week after your treatment. They usually return to normal 3 weeks after your treatment. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, you are at greater risk of having an infection.</p>	<p>To help prevent infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom. • Take care of your skin and mouth. • Avoid crowds and people who are sick. <p>Call your doctor <i>immediately</i> at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning when you pass urine.</p>
OTHER SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
<p>Mild to moderate diarrhea may occur.</p>	<p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. <p>Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help Manage Diarrhea*</i></p>
<p>Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in <i>Your bank of energy savings: How people with cancer can handle fatigue.</i>
<p>Hair loss is rare with raltitrexed. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with raltitrexed. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush. • Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.
<p>Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.

***Please ask your chemotherapy nurse, pharmacist or dietician for a copy.**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT

- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of raltitrexed.
- Raltitrexed may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with raltitrexed, and for 6 months following the last treatment. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.

- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with raltitrexed before you receive any treatment from them.

Medication Interactions

Other drugs such as folic acid, leucovorin (folinic acid) or vitamin preparations containing folic acid or leucovorin may ***interact*** with raltitrexed. Do not take these products the day before or on the day of your raltitrexed treatment. Tell your doctor if you are taking these or any other drugs as you may need extra blood tests or your dose may need to be changed.

Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS VERY IMPORTANT

SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer); chills; cough or pain or burning when you pass urine.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:

- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Skin rash, itching or peeling.

If you experience symptoms or changes in your body that have not been described above but worry you, or if any symptoms are severe, contact:

_____ at telephone number: _____