



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: GUEP

Etoposide-CisPlatin Protocol for Germ Cell Cancers

GU = GenitoUrinary

E = Etoposide

P = cisPlatin

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What are these drugs used for?

- Etoposide (VPESIDE®, ETOPOPHOS®) and Cisplatin (PLATINOL®) are used together to treat germ cell cancers (cancer of the testicles in males or cancer of the ovaries in females).

How do these drugs work?

- Etoposide and cisplatin work together to limit the growth of cancer and may improve your overall survival and help reduce your symptoms.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

How are these drugs given?

- Etoposide and cisplatin are given into a vein (IV).
- You will receive both medications at the clinic on the first day of treatment. You will receive this for 5 consecutive days and then will return after 21 days from the start of treatment. This 21 day period is called a “cycle”.

What will happen when I get my drugs?

- A blood test will be taken before starting treatment and before each cycle. The blood test may also be repeated at anytime during treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on the results of the blood tests and/or other side effects.
- Your doctor may also ask you to take a hearing test before and during treatment with cisplatin.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

Your doctor will review the risks of treatment and possible side effects with you before starting treatment.

Side effects that can occur with these medications are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur. Tips to help manage the side effects are included.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Cisplatin and etoposide burn if they leak under the skin.	Tell your nurse or doctor <i>immediately</i> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.
Allergic reactions may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction are dizziness, confusion and wheezing. This reaction occur immediately or several hours after receiving cisplatin or etoposide. This reaction can occur after the first dose or after many doses.	Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving cisplatin or contact your oncologist immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment and may last for up to 24 hours. Nausea may last longer for some patients (i.e. delayed nausea and vomiting).	You will be given a prescription for antinausea 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink plenty of liquids.• Eat and drink often in small amounts. Your doctor may manage delayed nausea and vomiting differently. Be sure to let your doctor know if you experience this.
Your white blood cells will decrease 2–3 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 6 weeks after your last 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.	To help prevent infection: <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.• 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.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Your platelets may decrease 2-3 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 6 weeks after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try not to bruise, cut, or burn yourself. • Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose. • Avoid constipation. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene. <p>Some medications such as ASA (e.g., ASPIRIN®) or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) may increase your risk of bleeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed by your doctor (e.g., ASA for your heart). • For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.
<p>Sore mouth may occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. If your gums bleed, use gauze instead of a brush. Use baking soda instead of toothpaste. • Make a mouthwash with ¼ teaspoon baking soda AND ¼ teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day.
<p>Diarrhea may occur.</p>	<p>If diarrhea is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts.

Side effects for ETOPOSIDE are listed in the table below:

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Dizziness or feeling faint may occur during administration of IV etoposide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your nurse or doctor immediately. • Lie down or sit with your feet elevated.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Hair loss is common and may begin within a few days or weeks of treatment. Your hair may thin or you may become totally bald. Your scalp may feel tender. You may lose hair on your face and body. Your hair will grow back once your treatments are over and sometimes between treatments. 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. • Protect your scalp with a hat, scarf or wig in cold weather. Some extended health plans will pay part of the cost of a wig. • Cover your head or apply sunscreen on sunny days. • Apply mineral oil to your scalp to reduce itching. • If you lose your eyelashes and eyebrows, protect your eyes from dust and grit with a broad-rimmed hat and glasses.
<p>Loss of appetite and weight loss may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase high calorie/protein fluids such as full-fat milk, homemade smoothies, nutritional supplements • Limit fluid intake prior to meals • Increase intake of high calorie foods
<p>Taste alteration may occur.</p>	<p>Speak to your doctor if this occurs.</p>
<p>Constipation may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids.
<p>Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.</p>	<p>Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.</p>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT:

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; sore throat; pain or burning when you pass urine; redness, pain or swelling of any area of your body; sores forming anywhere on your body.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin, extensive bruising.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- Signs of a **stroke** such as sudden onset of: severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in arm or leg.
- Signs of a **blood clot** such as tenderness or hardness over a vein, calf swelling and tenderness, sudden onset of cough, chest pain or shortness of breath.
- **Seizures** or **loss of consciousness**.

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

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- **Numbness** or tingling in feet or hands.
- **Muscle weakness.**
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Uncontrolled **nausea, vomiting** or diarrhea.
- Ringing in your ears or **hearing problems.**

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 _____