



**For the Patient: Ifosfamide**  
Other names: IFEX®

**BC Cancer Agency**

- **Ifosfamide** (eye fos' fa mide) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancer. It is a clear liquid that is injected into a vein.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to ifosfamide before receiving ifosfamide.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- You will also receive a medication called mesna that works to **protect** your bladder against harm from ifosfamide during and after your treatment.
- Your doctor may tell you to **drink** extra fluids so that you will pass more urine. This will help prevent kidney and bladder problems.
- Other drugs such as warfarin (COUMADIN®) may **interact** with ifosfamide. Tell your doctor if you are taking this 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 or stop taking any other drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of ifosfamide.
- Ifosfamide may cause **sterility** in men and at least temporary **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with ifosfamide.
- Ifosfamide may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with ifosfamide. 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 ifosfamide before you receive any treatment from them.

Side effects 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
Ifosfamide <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.	Tell your nurse or doctor <b><i>immediately</i></b> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.
<b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
<b>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for several hours.	You will be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. <b>It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred</b> , so follow directions closely. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*</li> </ul>
<b>Blood in the urine</b> may occur with ifosfamide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report this to your doctor immediately.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids, as directed by your doctor.</li> <li>• Urinate as often as possible.</li> </ul>
Your <b>white blood cells</b> may decrease 5 to 7 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal 2 to 3 weeks after your last treatment. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, <b>you are at greater risk of having an infection.</b>	To help prevent infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.</li> <li>• Avoid crowds and people who are sick.</li> <li>• Call your doctor <b><i>immediately</i></b> 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.</li> </ul>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Your <b>platelets</b> may decrease in the days after your treatment. They usually return to normal 3 weeks after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. <b>You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</b></p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to bruise, cut, or burn yourself.</li> <li>• Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose.</li> <li>• Avoid constipation.</li> <li>• Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed by your doctor (e.g., <b>ASA for your heart</b>).</li> <li>• For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair loss</b> is common and may begin within a few days or weeks of treatment. Your hair may thin or you may lose it completely. 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"> <li>• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>• Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes, and perms.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Cover your head or apply sunscreen on sunny days.</li> <li>• Apply mineral oil to your scalp to reduce itching.</li> <li>• If you lose your eyelashes and eyebrows, protect your eyes from dust and grit with a broad-rimmed hat and glasses.</li> </ul>

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

### **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), shaking chills; severe sore throat, productive cough (coughing up thick or green sputum); cloudy or foul smelling urine; painful, tender, or swollen red skin wounds or sores.
- Signs of **bladder problems** such as changes in urination, painful burning sensation, presence of blood, or abdominal pain.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin; extensive bruising.

