



BC Cancer Agency
CARE + RESEARCH
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Temozolomide capsules
Other names: TEMODAL®

- **Temozolomide** (tem-oh-ZOHL-oh-mide) is a drug that is used to treat cancer. It is a capsule that you take by mouth. The capsule contains lactose.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to dacarbazine (DTIC®) before taking temozolomide.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your test results and/or other side effects.
- It is important to **take** temozolomide exactly as directed by your doctor.
 - You may be given capsules of more than one strength to make the right dose. Make sure you understand the directions.
 - Temozolomide may be taken with food or on an empty stomach with a glass of water or juice. It is best to take your dose at the same time each day relative to when you eat (ie, try not to take it with a meal one day, and on an empty stomach the next day). Taking your dose on an empty stomach (at least one hour before or after you eat) or at bedtime may help reduce nausea.
 - Swallow the capsules whole. Do not open or chew the capsules.
- If you **vomit** after taking temozolomide, do not take a second dose. Call your doctor during office hours for advice.
- If you **miss a dose** of temozolomide, take it as soon as you can if it is within 12 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 12 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times. Call your doctor during office hours to ask about making up the missed dose.
- **Store** temozolomide capsules out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light and moisture.
- Other drugs such as valproic acid (DEPAKENE®) may **interact** with temozolomide. 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 taking any new drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of temozolomide. If you are taking dexamethasone or drugs to prevent seizures, discuss the safety of alcohol with your doctor.

- Temozolomide may cause ***sterility*** in men and ***menopause*** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with temozolomide.
- Temozolomide may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use ***birth control*** while being treated with temozolomide and for 6 months following treatment. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- ***Tell*** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with temozolomide 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
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for antinausea drug(s) to take before your 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"> • Taking your dose on an empty stomach, at least one hour before or after you eat, or at bedtime may help to reduce nausea. • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*
<p>Your white blood cells will decrease 3-4 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal within 2 weeks. 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. • Stop taking temozolomide and 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, sore throat or burning when you pass urine.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Your platelets may decrease 3-4 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal within 2 weeks. 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>Constipation or diarrhea may occur.</p>	<p>To help constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day). • Try ideas in <i>Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation</i>.* <p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help Manage Diarrhea</i>.* • Note: If lactose in milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the capsule may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® just before your temozolomide dose.
<p>Headache may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
<p>Sugar control may be affected in diabetics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
<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 to Energy Savings: Helping People with Cancer Handle Fatigue</i>.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Hair loss is rare with temozolomide. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with temozolomide. 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.

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

STOP TAKING TEMOZOLOMIDE AND 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.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.
- 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.

CONTINUE TAKING TEMOZOLOMIDE AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IF YOU HAVE:

- **Seizures** or **loss of consciousness**.
- Sudden onset of **severe muscle weakness** or **paralysis**.

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

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- **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, constipation or diarrhea.
- Pain in your stomach or abdomen.
- Headache not controlled with acetaminophen.
- For diabetics: uncontrolled blood sugars.
- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Skin rash or itching.
- Memory loss (amnesia)

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR DOCTOR
