



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

For the Patient: Anagrelide
Other names: **AGRYLIN®**

- **Anagrelide** (an-AG-re-lide) is a drug that is used to treat certain types of blood cancers. It is a capsule that you take by mouth. The capsule contains lactose.
- A **blood test** will be taken periodically during your treatment with anagrelide. The dose of anagrelide may be changed based on your platelet count.
- It is important to **take** anagrelide exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions. Anagrelide may be taken with food or on an empty stomach with a glass of water or juice.
- If you **miss a dose** of anagrelide:
 - **For 4 times a day dosing:** Take it as soon as you can if it is within 3 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 3 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing time.
 - **For 2 times a day dosing:** Take it as soon as you can if it is within 6 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 6 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- **Store** anagrelide capsules out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light and moisture.
- Other drugs such as sucralfate (SULCRATE®) **may interact** with anagrelide. Tell your doctor if you are taking any other drugs as you may need extra blood test 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 anagrelide.
- Anagrelide may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with anagrelide. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment.
- **Tell** your doctors or dentists that you are being treated with anagrelide before you receive any treatment from them.

Changes in blood counts

Anagrelide may cause temporary changes in your blood counts. Your doctor will be following these changes carefully by performing blood tests. Adjustment of your treatment may be needed in certain circumstances.

BLOOD COUNTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Normal platelets help your blood to clot normally after an injury (e.g., cut). When the platelet count is low, you may be more likely to bruise or bleed.</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. <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.

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 while you are taking anagrelide. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given an antinausea drug to take 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 <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*
<p>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. • 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 anagrelide dose.
<p>Swelling of hands, feet or lower legs may occur if your body retains extra fluid.</p>	<p>If swelling is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate your feet when sitting. • Avoid tight clothing.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
You may feel drowsy and/or dizzy when you first start taking anagrelide. This should lessen as your body adjusts to the drug.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling drowsy, dizzy, or less alert than usual. Avoid alcohol as it may make you more drowsy or dizzy.
Palpitations (forceful heartbeat) may occur while you are taking anagrelide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If palpitations are bothersome, discuss the problem with your doctor.
Abnormal heart rhythm (QT prolongation) rarely occurs.	<p>Minimize your risk of abnormal heart rhythm by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always checking with your pharmacist and doctor about drug interactions when starting a new medication, herbal product, or supplement. <p>Tell your doctor immediately or get emergency help if your heart is beating irregularly or fast, OR if you feel faint, lightheaded, or dizzy.</p>
Headaches may occur. Headaches are usually mild, but can be more severe.	<p>If headaches occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You should discuss this with your doctor. Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
Hair loss is rare with anagrelide. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with anagrelide. Colour and texture may change.	<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.
Your skin may sunburn more easily than usual.	Refer to <i>Your Medication Sun Sensitivity and Sunscreens*</i> or the <i>BC Health Guide</i> for more information.

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

STOP TAKING ANAGRELIDE AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of **heart or lung problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, anxiety, cold sweating, severe pain or pressure in the chest and/or jaw, neck, back or arms, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** soon after starting treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- Sudden severe **headache** or weakness.

