



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Avelumab
Other names: BAVENCIO®

- **Avelumab** (a vel' ue mab) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancer. It is a monoclonal antibody, a type of protein designed to help your own body's immune system target cancer cells to stop them from growing. 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 avelumab before receiving avelumab.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. Treatment may be interrupted based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- Other drugs may **interact** with avelumab. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start or stop taking any other drugs.
- **Do not receive any immunizations before discussing with your doctor.**
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of avelumab.
- Avelumab may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with avelumab and for at least one month after the last dose. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment and for at least one month after the last dose.
- **Tell** your doctor, dentist, and other health professionals that you are being treated with avelumab before you receive any treatment from them.

Side effects are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur. **Your treatment is a type of therapy known as immunotherapy and it may cause serious side effects related to your immune system. It is important to report side effects immediately to your healthcare team. Do not manage side effects at home without speaking with your healthcare team. Symptoms may be delayed and can develop months after your last dose. Refer to specific protocol handout (if available) for more details.**

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.</p>	<p>Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</p>
<p>Allergic reactions may sometimes occur. Signs of an allergic reaction may include fever, chills, flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, fast heartbeat, swelling, back pain, abdominal pain or breathing problems.</p> <p>This can occur immediately or several hours after receiving avelumab.</p>	<p>Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving avelumab or contact your oncologist immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.</p>
<p>Your white blood cells may decrease 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. • Avoid crowds and people who are sick. • Call your healthcare team immediately at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning when you pass urine.
<p>Your platelets may decrease after your 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, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.
<p>Diarrhea may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>Immediately see your healthcare team or get emergency help.</p>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Constipation may sometimes occur.	See or call your healthcare team as soon as possible.
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.	
Skin rashes and/or itching may sometimes occur.	
Headache may sometimes occur.	
Muscle pain or joint pain may sometimes occur.	
Swelling of hands, feet, or lower legs may sometimes occur if your body retains extra fluid.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you have diabetes. Tell your healthcare team if your blood sugars are not controlled.
Sugar control may sometimes be affected in patients with diabetes.	
Hair loss does not occur with avelumab.	

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heartbeat, swelling, fever, chills, flushing, rash, itching, back pain, abdominal pain or breathing problems.
- 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 **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin; extensive bruising.
- **Diarrhea** or changes in **bowel habits**; black tarry stools; blood or mucous in the stool; **abdominal pain**.
- Changes in **eyesight, eye pain, or redness**.
- Signs of **heart** or **lung problems** such as new or worsening cough, chest pain, shortness of breath, difficulty in breathing, irregular heartbeat, coughing blood, or swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, blood in the urine, swelling of feet or lower legs, or change in amount or colour of urine.

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **blood sugar problems** such as thirst and frequent need to pass urine.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.

