



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Bevacizumab injection

Other names: AVASTIN®, MVASI®, ZIRABEV®

- Bevacizumab (be-va-SIZ-yoo-mab) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancers. It is a monoclonal antibody: a type of protein designed to target and interfere with the growth of cancer cells. 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 bevacizumab, or any other monoclonal antibody, before taking bevacizumab.
- A **blood test**, **urine test**, and **blood pressure measurement** 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.
- Other drugs may **interact** with bevacizumab. 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 bevacizumab.
- Bevacizumab may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with bevacizumab, and for six months after your last treatment. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with bevacizumab before you receive any treatment from them.
- If you are planning to have **surgery**, you should stop bevacizumab 4 weeks before surgery and not restart bevacizumab until 4 weeks after surgery and only if the surgical wound is fully healed. This helps to lower the risk of bleeding and may prevent problems with wound healing after surgery.

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
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.	You may 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. • Try the ideas in <i>Practical Tips to Manage Nausea</i>.*
Constipation may sometimes occur.	To help constipation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day). • Try ideas in <i>Food Choices to Manage Constipation</i>.*
Diarrhea may sometimes occur.	If diarrhea is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Choices to Help Manage Diarrhea</i>.*
Headache may occur.	<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. • Tell your doctor if headache persists or if it is associated with vomiting, confusion or visual changes.
Muscle or joint pain may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. • Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.
Loss of appetite and weight loss sometimes occur.	Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i> .*
Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in <i>Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout</i>.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Minor bleeding, such as nosebleeds , may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit up straight and tip your head slightly forward. Tilting your head back may cause blood to run down your throat. • Pinch your nostrils shut between your thumb and forefinger or apply firm pressure against the bleeding nostril for 10 full minutes. • After 10 minutes, check to see if your nose is still bleeding. If it is, hold it for 10 more minutes. • Stay quiet for a few hours and do not blow your nose for at least 12 hours after the bleeding has stopped. • Get emergency help if a nosebleed lasts longer than 20 minutes.
Hair loss is rare with bevacizumab. If you lose hair, it will grow back once you stop treatment with bevacizumab. Colour and texture may change.	If hair loss is a problem, refer to <i>Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</i> .*

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

SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including breathing problems, flushing or redness, rash, dizziness, shivering, or chest pain.
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer); chills; cough; pain or burning when you pass urine.
- 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.
- Signs of **heart or lung problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, chest pressure, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, swelling of ankles or fainting.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin, extensive bruising.
- Persistent bleeding, such as **nosebleeds** lasting more than 20 minutes.
- Sudden **abdominal pain** or tenderness, with or without nausea, vomiting, or high fever.
- Severe **headache** that does not go away, or occurs with vomiting, confusion or changes in eyesight.
- **Seizures.**

