



For the Patient: Chlorambucil
Other names: LEUKERAN®

BC Cancer Agency

- Chlorambucil (klor-AM-byoo-sil) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancer. It is a tablet that you take by mouth.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to chlorambucil or any medications before taking chlorambucil.
- Tell your doctor if you have a history of **seizures**.
- 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.
- It is important to **take** chlorambucil exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions.
- **Take** chlorambucil on an empty stomach, with a full glass of water, at the same time each day. Chlorambucil tablets should be swallowed whole.
- For continuous once daily dosing: If you **miss a dose** of chlorambucil, 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.
- If you **vomit** right after taking the medication, call your doctor.
- Depending on your dose of chlorambucil, your doctor **may** tell you to **drink** plenty of liquids e.g., 8-12 cups (2000-3000 mL or 70-100 oz) a day. This helps prevent kidney problems.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of chlorambucil.
- Chlorambucil may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with chlorambucil.
- Chlorambucil may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with chlorambucil. 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 chlorambucil before you receive any treatment from them.
- **Store** chlorambucil tablets out of the reach of children, **in the refrigerator**, away from heat, light, and moisture.
- Chlorambucil is **usually well tolerated** and serious side effects are rare.

Changes in blood counts

Chlorambucil 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 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 doctor immediately 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. • Talk to your doctor about getting the Influenza (Flu shot) and Pneumonia vaccine.
<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. 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.

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, vomiting and abdominal discomfort may rarely occur. Nausea is more common with doses over 20 mg a day. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea 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.</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>Hair loss does not usually occur with chlorambucil.</p>	

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

STOP TAKING CHLORAMBUCIL 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), shaking chills; cough, 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.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including flushing, fever, rash, itching, dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.
- **Seizures** or **loss of consciousness**.
- Signs of **lung problems** such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing.

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

- Increased **sore throat or mouth** that makes it difficult to swallow comfortably.
- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- **Numbness** or **tingling** in feet or hands.

