



Provincial Health Services Authority

**For the Patient:** Cisplatin  
Other names: PLATINOL®; PLATINOL-AQ®

- Cisplatin (sis-PLAT-in) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancers. 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 cisplatin.
- 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.
- Your doctor may ask you to drink water on the morning of your treatment (2-3 cups). Following your treatment your doctor may ask you to **drink** plenty of liquids (8-12 cups a day). This helps prevent kidney problems.
- Your doctor may ask you to take a **hearing test** before and at various times during your treatment with cisplatin. This helps to detect hearing problems.
- Other drugs such as some antibiotics given by vein (e.g., tobramycin, vancomycin), and furosemide (LASIX®), phenytoin (DILANTIN®) and pyridoxine may **interact** with cisplatin. Tell your doctor if you are taking these 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 cisplatin.
- Cisplatin may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with cisplatin.
- Cisplatin may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with cisplatin. 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 cisplatin 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><b>Allergic reactions</b> may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction are dizziness, confusion and wheezing.</p> <p>This reaction occur immediately or several hours after receiving cisplatin. This reaction can occur after the first dose of cisplatin or after many doses of cisplatin.</p>	<p>Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving cisplatin or contact your oncologist immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.</p>
<p>Cisplatin <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.</p>	<p>Tell your nurse or doctor <b>immediately</b> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.</p>
<p><b>Pain or tenderness</b> 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><b>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for up to 24 hours. Nausea may last longer for some patients (i.e. delayed nausea and vomiting).</p>	<p>You will be given a prescription for antinausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. <b>It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <a href="#">Practical Tips to Manage Nausea</a>.*</li> </ul> <p>Your doctor may manage delayed nausea and vomiting differently. Be sure to let your doctor know if you experience this.</p>
<p><b>Diarrhea</b> may occur.</p>	<p>If diarrhea is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <a href="#">Food Choices to Help Manage Diarrhea</a>.*</li> </ul>
<p>Your <b>white blood cells</b> will decrease 2–3 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 6 weeks after your last treatment. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, <b>you are at greater risk of having an infection.</b></p>	<p>To help prevent infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.</li> <li>• Take care of your skin and mouth.</li> <li>• Avoid crowds and people who are sick.</li> <li>• Call your doctor <b>immediately</b> 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.</li> </ul>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Your <b>platelets</b> may decrease 2-3 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 6 weeks after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. <b>You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</b></p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to bruise, cut, or burn yourself.</li> <li>• Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose.</li> <li>• Avoid constipation.</li> <li>• Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed by your doctor (e.g., <b>ASA for your heart</b>).</li> <li>• For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sore mouth</b> may occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. <b>Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. If your gums bleed, use gauze instead of a brush. Use baking soda instead of toothpaste.</li> <li>• Make a mouthwash with <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> teaspoon baking soda AND <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <a href="#">Food Ideas to Try with a Sore Mouth</a>.*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair loss is rare</b> with cisplatin. If there is hair loss your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with cisplatin. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<p>If hair loss is a problem, refer to <a href="#">For the Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</a>.*</p>

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

