



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Gemtuzumab ozogamicin

Other names: MYLOTARG®

- **Gemtuzumab ozogamicin** (jem tooz' ue mab oh" zoe ga mye' sin) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancer. It is made up of a monoclonal antibody, a type of protein designed to target cancer cells, and a second drug which is intended to kill 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 gemtuzumab ozogamicin before receiving gemtuzumab ozogamicin.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. The dose and timing of your treatment may be changed based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- Other drugs may **interact** with gemtuzumab ozogamicin. 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 gemtuzumab ozogamicin.
- Gemtuzumab ozogamicin may affect **fertility** in men and women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin.
- Gemtuzumab ozogamicin may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin. Check with your doctor for the amount of time you should continue using birth control after your treatment has ended. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment and for at least one month afterwards.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with gemtuzumab ozogamicin before you receive any treatment from them.

Changes in blood counts

Gemtuzumab ozogamicin 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.
<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®).

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>Allergic reactions may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction may include flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, swelling or breathing problems.</p> <p>This can occur immediately or several hours after receiving gemtuzumab ozogamicin and usually only with the first or second dose.</p>	<p>Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving gemtuzumab ozogamicin or contact your oncologist immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.</p>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
Fever and chills commonly occur.	Fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer) may be a sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor immediately .
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment.	You will be given a prescription for antinausea drug(s) to take before your 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 fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in <i>Practical Tips to Manage Nausea</i>.*
Skin rashes may sometimes occur.	If itching is very irritating, call your doctor. Otherwise, be sure to mention it at your next visit.
Minor bleeding, such as nosebleeds , may sometimes 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.
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>.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Constipation may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Try ideas in <i>Food Choices to Manage Constipation</i>.*
Sore mouth may sometimes occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth, or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Make a mouthwash with ¼ teaspoon baking soda AND ¼ teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Try with a Sore Mouth</i>.*
Headache may sometimes occur.	Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
Sugar control may sometimes be affected in diabetic patients.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
Swelling of hands, feet, or lower legs may sometimes occur if your body retains extra fluid.	If swelling is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate your feet when sitting. • Avoid tight clothing.
Loss of appetite sometimes occurs.	Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i> .*
Tiredness and lack of energy may sometimes 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>.*
Hair loss does not occur with gemtuzumab ozogamicin.	

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

