



Provincial Health Services Authority

## For the Patient: Ipilimumab

Other names: YERVOY®

- **Ipilimumab** (ip" i lim' 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 [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 ipilimumab before receiving ipilimumab.
- 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.
- Other drugs may **interact** with ipilimumab. 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 ipilimumab.
- Ipilimumab may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with ipilimumab. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with ipilimumab 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 doctor. Do not manage side effects at home without speaking with your doctor. Refer to specific protocol handout if available for more details.**

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
<b>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.	See or call your doctor as soon as possible.
<b>Fever</b> may sometimes occur.	

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<b>Skin rashes</b> may sometimes occur.	See or call your doctor as soon as possible. Refer to <i>Your Medication Sun Sensitivity and Sunscreens*</i> or the <i>BC Health Guide</i> for more information on preventing sun exposure.
<b>Diarrhea</b> may sometimes occur.	See your doctor or get emergency help.
<b>Constipation</b> may sometimes occur.	
<b>Headache</b> may sometimes occur.	See or call your doctor as soon as possible.
<b>Loss of appetite</b> and <b>weight loss</b> sometimes occur.	
<b>Tiredness</b> and lack of energy may sometimes occur.	
<b>Hair loss</b> is rare with ipilimumab.	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 dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.
- Changes in **bowel habits, diarrhea** or **constipation**, black, tarry stools, or abdominal pain.

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

- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- Uncontrolled **nausea** or vomiting, or loss of appetite.
- **Numbness or tingling** in feet or hands or muscle weakness.
- **Skin rash** or **itching** or **peeling skin**.
- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- **Changes in eyesight** or **eye pain** or **redness**.
- Redness, swelling, pain, or sores on your **lips, tongue, mouth, or throat**.

#### CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:

- Headache not controlled with acetaminophen (e.g., **TYLENOL®**).
- Irritability or forgetfulness.

