



## For the Patient: Mesna for injection / Mesna injection solution for oral use

**BC Cancer Agency**

Other names: UROMITEXAN®

- **Mesna** (mes' na) is a drug that is used to protect your bladder from the harmful effects of some types of chemotherapy. It is a clear liquid that is injected into a vein or taken by mouth.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to mesna or other sulfhydryl (thiol) type medications (e.g., acetylcysteine (MUCOMYST®), captopril (CAPOTEN®), glutathione, penicillamine (CUPRIMINE®) before taking or receiving mesna.
- Your doctor may tell you to **drink** plenty of fluids so that you will pass more urine. This will help prevent kidney and bladder problems. **Empty your bladder** frequently: every 2 hours while you are awake and at bedtime for at least 24 hours after your chemotherapy. Your doctor may also tell you to get up in the night to empty your bladder.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of mesna.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with mesna before you receive any treatment from them.
- **For diabetics:** If you usually test your urine for ketones you may get a false positive result while you are taking mesna. Discuss positive results with a health professional before changing any of your medications.
- **If you are going to take mesna by mouth at home:**
  - It is important to take it **exactly as directed** by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions. You will need to make note of the time you received your chemotherapy that day.
  - You may **take** mesna with food or on an empty stomach.
  - **Dilute** each dose of mesna in a small glass of milk, juice, or carbonated beverage, immediately before you take it. This helps to cover the unpleasant taste. Be sure to finish the entire dose.
  - If you **vomit** the dose of mesna within 2 hours of taking it, check with your doctor. The dose may need to be repeated, or an injection given in its place.
  - **Store** mesna out of the reach of children. If you are provided with pre-measured doses in oral syringes, store them in the refrigerator. If you are provided with vials, store them at room temperature.

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
Mesna <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.	Tell your nurse or doctor <b><i>immediately</i></b> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.
<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>Upset stomach, nausea, and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for several hours.	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</b> , so follow directions closely. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*</li> </ul>
<b>Diarrhea or soft stools</b> may sometimes occur.	If diarrhea is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Diarrhea During Chemotherapy</i>.*</li> </ul>
<b>Tiredness</b> , generalized weakness and lack of energy may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Your Bank of Energy Savings: How People with Cancer Can Handle Fatigue</i>.*</li> </ul>

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

