



Provincial Health Services Authority

**For the Patient: Mitomycin injection**  
Other names: Mitomycin C, MUTAMYCIN®

- **Mitomycin** (mye toe mye' sin) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancer. It is a clear light blue liquid that is injected into a vein.
- 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 mitomycin. 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 mitomycin.
- Mitomycin may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with mitomycin. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with mitomycin 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
Mitomycin <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.	Tell your nurse or doctor <b>immediately</b> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.
<b>Pain</b> or <b>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>Fever</b> may sometimes occur shortly after treatment with mitomycin. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.</li> <li>• Fever which occurs more than a few days after treatment may be a sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor immediately.</li> </ul>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Nausea</b> and <b>vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for 48-72 hours. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> </ul> <p>Try the ideas in <a href="#">Practical Tips to Manage Nausea</a>.*</p>
<p>Your <b>white blood cells</b> may decrease 2 to 4 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 8 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>• 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>
<p>Your <b>platelets</b> may decrease 2 to 4 weeks after your treatment. They usually return to normal 8 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>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<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 <i>Food Ideas to Try with a Sore Mouth</i>.*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nail changes</b> such as change in colour or the appearance of bands may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>This will return to normal when you stop taking mitomycin.</p>
<p><b>Tiredness</b> and lack of energy may sometimes occur.</p>	<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>Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout</i>.*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Loss of appetite</b> may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i>.*</p>
<p><b>Cough</b> and/or <b>shortness of breath</b> may rarely occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring this to the attention of your doctor <b>immediately</b> as these may be early signs of toxicity to your lungs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair loss</b> is rare with mitomycin. If you lose hair, it will grow back once you stop treatment with mitomycin. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>• Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes, and perms.</li> </ul>

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

### 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; 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.
- **Cough** and/or **shortness of breath**.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, swelling of feet or lower legs.

