



For the Patient: Thiotepa injection

Other names:

BC Cancer Agency

- **Thiotepa** (thye oh tep' a) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancer. 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 thiotepa before receiving thiotepa.
- 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 such as phenytoin (DILANTIN®) may **interact** with thiotepa. Tell your doctor if you are taking this 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 or stop taking any other drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of thiotepa.
- Thiotepa may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with thiotepa.
- Thiotepa may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with thiotepa. 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 thiotepa 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
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.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea and vomiting 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. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*
<p>Skin rashes may rarely occur.</p>	<p>If itching is very irritating, call your doctor. Otherwise, be sure to mention it at your next visit.</p>
<p>Fever may rarely occur shortly after treatment with thiotepa. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. • Fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer) which occurs more than a few days after treatment may be the sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor immediately.
<p>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.</p>	<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 ½ teaspoon baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas for a Sore Mouth during Chemotherapy</i>.*
<p>Your white blood cells may decrease 10-14 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal 28-30 days after your last treatment. 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.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Your platelets may decrease 7-14 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal 28-30 days after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</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. Maintain good oral hygiene. <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®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.
<p>Tiredness and lack of energy may rarely occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in <i>Your Bank to Energy Savings: How People with Cancer Can Handle Fatigue</i>.*
<p>Hair loss is rare with thiotepa. If you lose hair, it will grow back once you stop treatment with thiotepa. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush. • Care should be taken with use of bleaches, dyes, and perms.

*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.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.

