



**For the Patient: Vinorelbine**  
Other names: NAVELBINE®

## BC Cancer Agency

- ***Vinorelbine*** (vi-NOR-el-been) is a drug that is used to treat breast, lung and other kinds of cancer. It is made from the periwinkle plant. Vinorelbine is a clear 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 vinorelbine. Tell your doctor if you are taking 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 taking any new drugs.
- The ***drinking of alcohol*** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of vinorelbine.
- Vinorelbine may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use ***birth control*** while being treated with vinorelbine. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- ***Tell*** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with vinorelbine 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
Vinorelbine <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>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.	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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Control Nausea</i>.</li> </ul>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Fever</b> may occur shortly after treatment with vinorelbine. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take acetaminophen (eg, TYLENOL®) every 3-4 hours.</li> <li>• Fever which occurs more than 48 hours after treatment may be the sign of an infection. See details below.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Constipation</b> or <b>diarrhea</b> may occur.</p>	<p>To help constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise if you can.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day).</li> <li>• Try ideas in <i>Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation</i>.</li> </ul> <p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Coping with Diarrhea</i></li> </ul>
<p>Your <b>white blood cells</b> will decrease 7-10 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal 2-3 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>• Take care of your skin and mouth.</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><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 ½ teaspoon baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day.</li> <li>• Try soft, bland foods like puddings, milkshakes and cream soups.</li> <li>• Avoid spicy, crunchy or acidic food, and very hot or cold foods.</li> <li>• Try ideas in <i>Easy to Chew, Easy to Swallow Food Ideas</i>.</li> </ul>

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<b>Tiredness</b> and lack of energy may 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>
<b>Hair loss sometimes occurs</b> with vinorelbine. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with vinorelbine. Colour and texture may change.	<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>
<b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed within 1-2 days after treatment. This may extend all the way up the arm. Sometimes pain may occur where the cancer is located.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</li> <li>• For minor pain, take acetaminophen (eg, <b>TYLENOL®</b>). Take ibuprofen (e.g., <b>ADVIL®</b>) for mild to moderate pain.</li> <li>• See your doctor if the pain continues to bother you.</li> </ul>
<b>Numbness or tingling of the fingers or toes</b> may occur. This will slowly return to normal once your treatments are over. This may take several months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be careful when handling items that are sharp, hot or cold.</li> <li>• Tell your doctor at you next visit, especially if you have trouble with buttons, writing or picking up small objects.</li> </ul>
Your <b>skin may redden</b> where you have had radiation treatments.	This will slowly return to normal once you stop treatment with vinorelbine.

**SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:**

- Signs of a **stroke** such as sudden onset of: severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in arm or leg,
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer); chills; cough; or pain or burning when you pass urine.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin.
- Signs of a **blood clot** such as tenderness or hardness over a vein, calf swelling and tenderness, sudden onset of cough, chest pain or shortness of breath.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat.

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

- Severe **skin reaction** where you have had radiation.
- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- **Trouble in walking.**
- **Blood in your urine.**

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

- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, constipation, or diarrhea.
- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Severe jaw pain or headache.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed or along the arm.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on you lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Skin rash or itching.

**REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR DOCTOR**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---