



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Nivolumab SC injection

Other names: OPDIVO® SC

- **Nivolumab** (nye vol' 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 help your own body's immune system target cancer cells to stop them from growing. It is a clear liquid that is injected under the skin (subcutaneously or SC).
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to nivolumab or hyaluronidase before receiving nivolumab subcutaneous injection.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. The dose and timing of your treatment may be changed based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- Other drugs may **interact** with nivolumab. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start or stop taking any other drugs.
- Do not receive any **immunizations** before discussing with your doctor.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of nivolumab.
- Nivolumab may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with nivolumab and for at least five months after the last dose. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment.
- **Tell** your doctor, dentist, and other health professionals that you are being treated with nivolumab before you receive any treatment from them.
- **Tell** your healthcare team that you are being treated with nivolumab subcutaneous injection before you receive other subcutaneous injections. Other medications should not be injected into the same injection site as nivolumab if possible.

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 healthcare team. Do not manage side effects at home without speaking with your healthcare team. Symptoms may be delayed and can develop months after your last dose. Refer to specific protocol handout (if available) for more details.**

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Allergic reactions may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction may include flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, swelling or breathing problems. This can occur immediately or several hours after receiving nivolumab.	Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving nivolumab or contact your healthcare team immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.
Redness, swelling, pain, or tenderness commonly occurs where the needle was placed. These reactions typically occur within 1-2 days and usually disappear on their own. Reactions are less common with later treatments even if you have a reaction with the first treatment.	• Apply cool compresses for 15-20 minutes several times a day after the injection. Tell your healthcare team at the next visit if these reactions are very painful or last longer than 2 days.
Your white blood cells may decrease after your 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.	To help prevent infection: • Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom. • Avoid crowds and people who are sick. • Call your healthcare team immediately at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning when you pass urine.
Normal platelets help your blood to clot normally after an injury (e.g., cut). When the platelet count is low, you may be more likely to bruise or bleed.	To help prevent bleeding problems: • 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. Some medications such as ASA (e.g., ASPIRIN®) or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) may increase your risk of bleeding. • 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.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Diarrhea may sometimes occur.	See your healthcare team or get emergency help.
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment. If you are vomiting and it is not controlled, you can quickly become dehydrated. Most people have little or no nausea.	See or call your healthcare team as soon as possible.
Skin rashes may sometimes occur.	
Constipation may sometimes occur.	
Sugar control may rarely be affected in patients with diabetes.	
Loss of appetite and weight loss sometimes occur.	
Tiredness and lack of energy commonly occur.	If hair loss is a problem, refer to <i>Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</i> .*
Hair loss is rare with nivolumab.	
Numbness or tingling of the fingers or toes rarely occur.	• Be careful when handling items that are sharp, hot, or cold. • Be careful when walking on uneven surfaces or doing activities that need you to balance or be steady. • Tell your healthcare team at your next visit, especially if you have trouble with buttons, writing, picking up small objects, walking, or have fallen.

*Please ask your nurse or pharmacist for a copy.

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM 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.
- 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.
- Changes in **bowel habits**, **diarrhea**, black, tarry stools; blood or mucous in the stool; severe **abdominal pain**.

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- Signs of **thyroid problems** such as unusual weight gain or loss, feeling hot or cold, deepened voice, or unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Changes in **eyesight, eye pain** or **redness**.

- Headache not controlled with acetaminophen (e.g., **TYLENOL®**).
- Skin rash or itching.
- Irritability or forgetfulness or decreased sex drive.
- Changes in skin colour (lightening).

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

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