Cytarabine

- **Cytarabine** (sye-TARE-a-been) is a drug that is used to treat many types of cancer. It is a clear liquid that is injected into your spine (intrathecal).
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to cytarabine before taking cytarabine.
- 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.
- Cytarabine may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with cytarabine. 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 Cytarabine medication before you receive any treatment from them.

Side effects that may occur and tips for management

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15 to 20 minutes several times a day.
Nausea and vomiting 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. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts.
Fever may rarely occur shortly after treatment with cytarabine intrathecal injection. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.	• Take paracetamol (Panadol ®). • Fever which occurs more than a few days after treatment may be the sign of an infection.
Headache may rarely occur. Headache should last no longer than 8 hours.	• Take paracetamol (Panadol ®). • Drink plenty of fluids the day before and the day of treatment. • On the day of treatment, lie down as much as possible after receiving cytarabine intrathecal injection. • Call your doctor **immediately** if you experience a headache that lasts longer than 8 hours after receiving cytarabine intrathecal injection.
Hair loss does not occur with cytarabine intrathecal injection.	

Patient education leaflet
Adapted from BC Cancer Drug Manual - Canada (Developed: September 1994; Revised: May 2007)
Prepared by Clinical Pharmacy Department at the National Center for Cancer Care and Research - Version 1 on May 2017

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

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heartbeat, face swelling, or breathing problems.
- Signs of **meningitis** such as sudden onset of severe headache, back pain, stiff neck, muscle weakness, nausea and vomiting.
- **Seizures** or **loss of consciousness**.
- **Numbness or tingling** in feet, hands, or face.
- Difficulty with **balance or trouble** walking or talking.
- **Unexpected mood changes** including confusion, irritability, and drowsiness.
- **Changes in eyesight**.
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), shaking chills; cough, 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.

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

- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Headache not controlled with Paracetamol (Panadol ®).
- Easy bruising or minor bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, pain, or sores where the needle was placed.

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR DOCTOR

This is a summary of useful information to help you understand and take your medicine safely .

We are available to answer your questions For urgent inquiries contact :

- **Urgent care unit at the National Center of Cancer Care and Research (NCCCR) TEL : 44397179 (available 24 hours, all week days).**

For further information or question contact :

- **Your doctor** (from 7 am – 3 pm) .
- **Clinical Pharmacy section,** TEL: 44397239 (Sun-Thurs from 7 am – 3 pm) .
- **Outpatient Pharmacy**, TEL: 44397531, 44397825 (Sun-Thurs from 7 am – 3 pm) .

Pharmacy Department

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