Denileukin diftitox (Ontak®)
(“De ni loo kin dif ti toks”)

**How this drug is given:** by vein (IV)

**Purpose:** to kill cancer cells in cutaneous (skin) T-cell lymphomas (CTCL)

**Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment**

1. Facial flushing (warmth or redness of the face), itching, or a skin rash could occur after taking denileukin diftitox. These symptoms are due to an allergic response and should be reported to your doctor or nurse right away.

2. Flu-like symptoms often occur with the first time infusion (fever, chills, headaches, body aches, etc.) You may be given Tylenol® and Benadryl® as premedication to decrease symptoms. Slowing the infusion may also be helpful.

3. Burning, itching, redness, or swelling at the injection site may occur. These reactions are usually mild and go away. Applying a cold pack to the area may help.

**Things that may occur days to weeks after drug is given**

1. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is given. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You may buy this at most drug stores. It is also important to drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help, tell your doctor or nurse.

2. Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this.

3. Skin changes such as dryness or a rash on your body may occur. Sunlight may cause your skin to burn more easily so use a sunscreen of SPF 30 or greater when you go outside. Do not go to tanning booths.

4. Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.

5. Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise can also be helpful in maintaining your energy.
6. You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. This may happen about 2 to 3 days after you get treatment. If these bother you, ask your doctor or nurse what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.

7. If you have a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, report this to your doctor or nurse.

**Things that may occur months to years after treatment**

1. You may have changes in your eyesight which include blurred vision or changes in how you see color. Eye exams may be done.

2. **Fertility and Related Precautions**
   - It is still very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could be harmful to an unborn baby.
   - Men may become sterile and may want to think about sperm banking prior to chemotherapy.
   - For women, your period (menstrual cycle) may not be regular for a while or may stop completely and you may not be able to get pregnant.
   - Women should not breast-feed while receiving this drug.
   - If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your doctor or nurse.

The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects in this teaching sheet may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you take other medications. Please talk with your doctor or nurse if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your health care team.

If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your health care team right away.

**THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS OR NOTES FOR THE PATIENT AND FAMILY:**

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