Doxorubicin Liposome (Doxil®)
(“doks oh ROO bi sin lye po soam”)

How this drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: To destroy cancer cells in many different types of cancer. This drug is a special form of the cancer destroying drug doxorubicin that is mixed in a special solution of liposomes (“fat bodies”).

Things that may occur during or within hours of each treatment

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

2. Your blood pressure may drop or your heart rate may slow down while you are getting this drug. This usually goes back to normal on its own.

3. If you feel any burning or tingling in the area of your IV, please let your nurse know right away. If you develop any swelling or redness after you go home, please call your doctor or nurse.

4. Your urine may turn orange or red, which may last 1 to 2 days after the drug is given. This happens because the drug is red and it leaves your body in the urine.

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

1. Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. Drugs to help with this may be given to you.

2. You may get some hair thinning.

3. The palms of your hands or the soles of your feet may become red and painful. This is called hand-foot syndrome. Tingling and peeling of the skin may occur. This happens more often with repeated infusions. Avoid tight fitting shoes and moisturize hands and feet.

4. Your skin may be more sensitive to touch and pressure.
   • Avoid tight clothing
   • Wear well-fitting shoes
   • Avoid hot water
   • Limit activities that cause repeated pressure on your:
     • hands (activities such as chopping food or gardening)
     • feet (power walking, jumping)
     • elbows (leaning on them)
5. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within 3 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 within 48 hours, tell your doctor or nurse.

6. Your blood cell counts may drop. This is known as bone marrow suppression. This includes a decrease in your:
   - Red blood cells, which carry oxygen in your body to help give you energy
   - White blood cells, which fight infection in your body
   - Platelets, which help clot the blood to stop bleeding

   This may happen 7 to 14 days after the drug is given and then blood counts should return to normal. If you have a fever of 100.5°F (39°C) or higher, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, tell your doctor or nurse right away.

7. Mouth sores may develop 7 to 10 days after the drug is given. You may have a burning sensation and increased redness inside the mouth or on the lips. Use a baking soda mouth rinse about 4 or 5 times a day in addition to the other mouth rinses prescribed by your physician (i.e. Peridex, Nystatin, etc.)

   **Mouth Rinse Recipe:**
   Mix: 1 tsp salt or baking soda with 8oz. glass of water

   Avoid commercial mouthwashes, since they often contain alcohol which causes dryness in the mouth. A soft-bristle toothbrush should be used. If you are unable to eat or swallow due to discomfort, please notify your nurse or physician. Be sure to check with your doctor before having any dental procedures performed.

**Things that may occur after treatment ends (even months to years later)**

1. Changes to the heart can occur after long exposure to Doxil®. Heart damage is related to the total amount of the drug that has been given. Report any shortness of breath chest pain and/or swelling in feet or ankles.

2. Fertility:
   - It is still very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could hurt 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.
   - 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: