Fludarabine (Fludara®)  
(“floo DARE a been”)

How drug is given: by vein (IV)

Purpose: to kill leukemia and other cancers

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

1. Fludarabine, as with many drugs, may cause an allergic reaction. If you have a rash, facial flushing (warmth or redness of the face), or itching during or after you get this drug, please tell your doctor or nurse right away.

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

3. 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, tell your doctor or nurse.

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

1. 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 (38°C) or higher, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, tell your doctor or nurse right away.

2. You may get mouth sores 7 to 10 days after this drug is given. It is important to keep your mouth clean. A soft-bristle toothbrush should be used for brushing your teeth. You may have a burning feeling and redness inside the mouth or on the lips. Use a baking soda mouth rinse 4 or 5 times a day.
Other mouth rinses may be ordered by your doctor. Do not use mouth washes that have alcohol in them because they will dry out the mouth. If you cannot eat or swallow because of this, let your doctor or nurse know. Check with your doctor before having any dental work done.

3. If you have any changes in your eyesight, let your doctor or nurse know, as it may get worse.

4. Skin changes such as dryness or a rash on your body may occur. Ask your doctor or nurse what lotions or creams you may use.

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. Flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, headache, muscle and/or joint aches are common. If these occur, talk to your doctor or nurse.

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

- Fertility and Related Precautions:
  - 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.
  - 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.