**Hydroxyurea (Hydrea®)**

(“hy drox ee yoo REE uh”)

For use in leukemia

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**How this drug is given:** By mouth

**Purpose:** To treat chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML) and acute myelogenous leukemia (AML)

**How to take by mouth**

- Swallow each capsule whole; do not crush or chew them. If you are unable to swallow the capsule, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.

- Take with or without food.

- If you miss a dose, take as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. **Do not double dose.**

**Storage**

- Store this medicine at room temperature, away from heat and moisture. Keep this medicine in its original container, out of reach of children and pets.

**Things that may happen during treatment**

1. Some patients may have mild nausea. Drugs to help with this may be given to you.

2. Drowsiness, dizziness, or headaches can occur, but usually will not last more than 24 hours. Please avoid driving or operating machinery.

3. 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

   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.**
4. You may get some hair thinning.

5. 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.

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

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.

6. Skin changes such as dryness, rash or darkening of skin color can occur on your body. There may be redness and pain over areas where you have gotten radiation therapy. Sunlight may cause your skin to burn more easily so use a sunscreen of SPF 30 or greater when you go outside.

7. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur. 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).

8. Mild constipation may occur within 1 to 2 weeks after treatment begins. Please increase your fluid intake and increase fiber in your diet by eating fresh fruits and vegetables. A daily stool softener, such as docusate (Colace®) and/or laxatives such as senna (Senakot®) may be helpful. If these do not help within 48 hours, tell your doctor or nurse. Do not use bulk forming laxatives such as Metamucil® without talking with your doctor or nurse.

9. It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex since this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby. Women should not breast-feed while receiving hydroxyurea. 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.
Managing your oral chemotherapy schedule at home can be challenging. To help you with this, consider using tools to help you keep track of your schedule and any side effects you may have. You can find these tools online at [www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary](http://www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary).

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