



Chemotherapy: Dactinomycin (Cosmegen®)

Pronounced: "dak-ti-noe-MYE-sin"

How drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: To stop the growth of cancer cells in Wilm's tumor, Ewing's sarcoma, rhabdomyosarcoma, and other cancers

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

- You may have nausea, vomiting, and/or loss of appetite. Nausea and vomiting may begin soon after the drug is given and may last more than 24 hours. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- Care is taken to prevent this drug from leaking into nearby tissue. If the drug leaks this is called an *extravasation* and it can cause harm. If you feel warmth, burning, or tingling in the area of your IV, please **tell your nurse right away**.
- **Swelling, redness, blisters or bruising around the area of the IV or port** may occur one or two weeks after getting this drug. **Call your cancer care team immediately if you have any of these symptoms.**

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

- Your blood cell counts may drop. This is known as bone marrow suppression. This may happen 7 to 14 days after the drug is given and then blood counts should return to normal. This includes a decrease in:
 - 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 bleedingIf you have a **fever of 100.5°F (39°C) or higher**, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, **tell your cancer care team right away**.
- If you have had radiation therapy, your skin may become painful and red in the area(s) where you received radiation. Ask your cancer care team what lotions or creams you may use.
- Some or all of your hair may fall out around 3 to 4 weeks after treatment starts. You may lose hair on your head as well as facial and body hair. You may want to buy a wig before hair loss begins. Hair may grow back during treatment.
- Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise may help you maintain your energy. .
- Your liver may be affected by this medicine. On occasion, blood work will be taken to monitor your liver function.

- In rare cases, this medicine may damage the blood vessels in the liver and liver cells. This is called *veno-occlusive disease*. It may be mild and not require major treatment. If more severe, it can damage your liver and be life threatening. Tell your cancer care team if you experience rapid weight gain (especially around the abdomen), yellowing of the skin, and pain in right upper side of abdomen. Your cancer care team will monitor your liver function with blood tests

Sexual health and fertility concerns

Women

- It is not safe to take this medicine during pregnancy. It could harm an unborn baby.
- It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could harm an unborn baby.
- 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 breastfeed while receiving this drug.

Men

- It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex with a woman of child-bearing age, because this drug could harm an unborn baby.
- Men can become sterile and may want to consider sperm banking prior to treatment.

The information in this document includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed here 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 are taking other medications. Please speak with your cancer care team if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your cancer care team.

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