



## Chemotherapy: Ado-trastuzumab emtansine (Kadcyla®)

Pronounced: "a-do-tras-TU-zoo-mab em-TAN-seen"

**How drug is given:** By vein (IV)

**Purpose:** To treat HER-2 positive breast cancer and other cancers

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

- Facial flushing (warmth or redness of the face), itching, or a skin rash could occur. These symptoms are due to an allergic response. If you notice these symptoms, **tell your cancer care team right away.**
- If you feel any burning or tingling in the area of your IV, **tell your nurse right away.** If you develop any skin irritation, swelling, or redness after you go home, please call your cancer care team.

### Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

- Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this
- 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 also help you maintain your energy
- You may lose some feeling or have tingling, burning, losing feeling, or shooting pains in your hands and/or feet. This is called peripheral neuropathy. This may increase with continued treatment. Please tell your cancer care team if you have trouble buttoning your clothes or have been losing your balance more often. Peripheral neuropathy may get better over time, after the drug is stopped. To avoid cuts and falls, be careful handling sharp objects, use handrails, and wear supportive shoes.
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- Your blood cell counts may drop. This is known as bone marrow suppression. This

includes a decrease in your:

- Platelets, which help clot the blood to stop bleeding

You may get a nosebleed that is hard to stop. If you have a nosebleed, sit with your head tipped slightly forward and apply pressure by lightly pinching the soft part of your nose between the thumb and forefinger for a full 10 minutes. Applying ice to the bridge of the nose can also help.

- 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**.
- Mild constipation may occur after treatment begins.
  - Increase your fluid intake and get more 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.
- Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is started. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug stores. Be sure to also drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help within 24 hours, **call your cancer care team**.
- Your liver may be affected by this medicine. On occasion, blood work will be taken to monitor your liver function.
- You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. If this bothers you, ask your doctor or nurse what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.
- You may get a headache. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can take for this.
- Some patients have experienced dry mouth
- This drug may affect your heart. Your heart function will be followed. You should let your cancer care team know if you are coughing, having trouble breathing, have chest pain and/or swelling in the feet or ankles.

### Sexual health and fertility

If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.

#### Women

- To keep from getting pregnant, use a barrier form of effective birth control and keep using it for at least 7 months after you stop treatment.

- Barrier methods of birth control prevent the sperm from reaching the egg. Discuss with your cancer team which type of barrier method is best for you. Some barrier methods are cervical caps, female/male condoms, and diaphragms with spermicides. Some are available over the counter; others must be prescribed.
- Women should not breast-feed while receiving this medicine.

### Men

- It is very important to use birth control while taking this drug and for 4 months after stopping the drug, if you are having sex with a woman of child-bearing age, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.

*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.*