



Alemtuzumab (Campath[®], Lemtrada[®])

("ah-lem-too-zuh-mab")

How this drug is given: by vein (IV)

Purpose: to stop the growth of cancer cells in B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia (B-CLL) and other cancers

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

1. Your blood pressure may drop or your heart rate may slow down while you are getting this drug.
2. Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this.
3. An allergic reaction may occur. Tell your cancer care team right away if you have fever, chills, chest pain, trouble breathing, itching, rash, or dizziness. You will be given drugs before you start alemtuzumab that will try to keep this from happening.

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 :
 - 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, **call your cancer care team right away.**

2. You may be at increased risk for infections. You may be given drugs to prevent infection. You may need to continue them for 2 months following the end of alemtuzumab treatment.
3. 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. If this does not help within 24 hours, **call your cancer care team.** Drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks).
4. You may have difficulty sleeping. Please talk to your cancer care team if you cannot sleep.

5. Skin changes, such as a rash or hives on your body, may occur. Ask your doctor or nurse what lotions or creams you may use.
6. You may get a headache. Please talk to your cancer care team about what you can take for this.
7. In rare cases, nerves can be affected by this medicine. This side effect is called *progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy* (PML). Symptoms include visual changes, headaches, weakness, sleepiness, and confusion. This can happen a few days to one year after starting this medicine. Call your cancer care team **right away** if you have any of these symptoms.

Things that may occur after your treatment ends

1. Fertility and Related Precautions:
 - It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.
 - Women should not breastfeed while receiving this drug.
 - If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.
2. In rare cases, you may be at risk of getting another type of cancer after taking alemtuzumab.

This document includes some but not necessarily all of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed 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 are taking other medications. Please speak 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: