



Chemotherapy: Cladribine (Leustatin®)

Pronounced: "KLAD-rih-BEAN"

How drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: To treat hairy cell leukemia, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), 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 and should be reported to your cancer care team right away.

Things that may occur days to weeks after drug is given

- 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 cancer care team right away**.

- 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.
- Some patients may have mild nausea. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- You may get a headache. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can take for this.
- 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.

Sexual health and reproductive concerns

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

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.

CLADRIBINE

- 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 sperm banking prior to treatment.

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 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.