



Denileukin diftitox (Ontak®)

("De-ni-loo-kin dif-ti-toks")

How this drug is given: by vein (IV)

Purpose: to kill cancer cells in cutaneous (skin) T-cell lymphomas (CTCL)

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

1. 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 may be asked to take dexamethasone (a steroid) at home before you get Denileukin diftitox.
2. Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, headaches, body aches, etc) often occur with the first infusion. You may be given Tylenol® and Benadryl® as premedication to decrease symptoms. Slowing the infusion may also be helpful.
3. Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.

Things that may occur days to weeks after drug is given

1. Your liver may be affected by this medicine. On occasion, blood work will be taken to monitor your liver function
2. If you have an ongoing fever of 100.5 F (38C) or higher, be sure to drink plenty of fluids. If you become dizzy or lightheaded, call your cancer care team right away.
3. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is given. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug stores. It is also important to drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help, tell your doctor or nurse.
4. Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this.
5. You may get a headache. Please talk to your cancer care team about what you can take for this.

6. Skin changes, such as dryness or a rash on your body, may occur. Ask your cancer care team what lotions or creams you may use.
7. 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.
8. You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. This may happen about 2 to 3 days after treatment. If these bother you, ask your doctor or nurse what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.
9. If you have a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, tell your doctor or nurse.

Things that may occur months to years after treatment

1. You may have changes in your eyesight, such as blurred vision or changes in how you see color. Eye exams may be done.
2. **Fertility and Related Precautions.** If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your doctor or nurse.
 - It is still very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could be harmful to an unborn baby.
 - Men may become sterile and may want to think about sperm banking prior to chemotherapy.
 - 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.

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.

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