



Chemotherapy: Doxorubicin Liposome (Doxil®)

Pronounced: *"doks-oh-ROO-bi-sin lye-po-soam"*

How drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: To stop the growth of cancer cells in many different types of cancer. This drug is a special form of the cancer drug doxorubicin, mixed in a special solution of liposomes ("fat bodies").

Things that may occur during or within hours of treatment

- 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. This can be life threatening.
- You may be given drugs before you start doxorubicin liposome that will try to keep this from happening. You may be asked to take dexamethasone (a steroid) at home before you start treatment.
- Your blood pressure may drop, or your heart rate may slow down while you are getting this drug. You might feel lightheaded or dizzy. This usually goes back to normal on its own. It is important to ask for assistance and take your time when you stand up during or after your treatment.
- If you feel any burning or tingling near your IV, please **tell your nurse right away**. If you develop any swelling or redness after you go home, **call your cancer care team right away**.

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

- Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given drugs to help with this.
- Some of your hair may thin and fall out with treatment.
- Tingling and peeling of the skin may occur. This happens more often with repeated infusions. Avoid tight fitting shoes. Use thick (moisturizing) creams on hands and feet.
- Some people 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.
- Skin changes, such as dryness or a rash may occur. Ask your cancer care team what lotions or creams you may use.

- Mild constipation may occur after treatment begins. Please increase your fluid intake and increase 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 cancer care team. Do not use bulk forming laxatives such as Metamucil® without talking with your cancer care team.
- 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 urine may turn orange or red, which may last 1 to 2 days after the drug is given. This happens because the drug is red, and it leaves your body in the urine.
- 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 (38°C) or higher**, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, **call your cancer care team right away**.
- You may get mouth sores 7 to 10 days after this drug is given. It is important to keep your mouth clean. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush for brushing your teeth. You may have a burning feeling and redness inside the mouth or on the lips. Use a baking soda mouth rinse 4 or 5 times a day.

Mouth Rinse Recipe:

Mix: 1 tsp salt or baking soda with 8oz. glass of water

Other mouth rinses may be ordered by your doctor. Do not use mouth washes that have alcohol in them, because they will dry out the mouth. If you cannot eat or swallow because of this, tell your cancer care team. Check with your doctor before having any dental work done.

Things that may occur after treatment ends (even months to years later)

- This drug may affect your heart. This is usually linked to the total amount of drug that you are given over time. Your heart function will be followed. You should tell your cancer care team if you are coughing, have trouble breathing, have chest pain, and/or have swelling in the feet or ankles.
- In rare cases, you may be at risk of getting another type of cancer after getting doxorubicin.

Sexual health and fertility:

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

Women:

- It is very important to use birth control while taking this drug and for at least one month after your last dose if you are having sex, because this drug may be harmful to 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.