



## Nelarabine (Arranon®)

("nel-ARE-a-been")

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

**Purpose:** to kill lymphoma and other cancers

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

- You may have nausea, vomiting, and/or loss of appetite. Nausea and vomiting may begin soon after the drug is given and may last more than 24 hours. You may be given medicine to help with this.

### 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. 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.
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. Be sure to also drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help within 24 hrs, **call your cancer care team right away**.
4. You may lose some feeling, or have tingling or burning 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. Peripheral neuropathy should get better over time, after the drug is stopped. Take care when handling sharp objects, use handrails to avoid falls, and wear supportive shoes.

5. If you develop a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, tell your cancer care team.
6. Some or all of your hair may fall out around 3 to 4 weeks after treatment starts. You may lose hair on your head as well as facial and body hair. You may want to buy a wig before hair loss begins. Hair may grow back during treatment.
7. Tell your doctor or nurse right away if any of these symptoms occur: Feeling sleepy, dizzy, or off balance; headache; or muscle weakness
8. 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 help you maintain your energy.

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

- Fertility:
  - It is still very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug could hurt 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.
  - If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.

*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 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 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:

