



Chemotherapy: Oxaliplatin (Eloxatin®)

Pronounced: "ox AL i pla tin"

How drug is given: By vein (IV)

Purpose: For the treatment of colon cancer, rectal cancer, and other cancers

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.
- This drug might make you more sensitive to the cold. Do not drink ice cold beverages during infusion.
- Care is taken to prevent this drug from leaking into nearby tissue. If the drug leaks this is called an extravasation and it can cause harm. If you feel warmth, burning or tingling in the area of your IV, please **tell your nurse right away**.
 - **Swelling, redness, blisters or bruising around the area of the IV or port** may occur one or two weeks after getting this drug. **Call your cancer care team immediately if you notice any of these symptoms.**

Things that may occur a few days to weeks later

- You may also be sensitive to cold temperatures and cold objects. 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.

There are several things that you can do to reduce the side effects caused by cold temperatures:

- Cover yourself with a blanket while you are getting oxaliplatin infusion.
- Wear warm clothing and gloves in cold weather. Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf. This helps warm the cold air going into your lungs.
- Wear gloves if you need to take items from the freezer or refrigerator.
- Try warming up your hands under warm water if they get cold.
- Drink fluids warm or at room temperature.
- Drink through a straw.
- Avoid setting your air conditioning to low temperatures that make you feel cold.

- 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.
- If you develop a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, tell your cancer care team.
- 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 help you maintain your energy.
- Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within 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 liver may be affected by this medicine. On occasion, blood work will be taken to monitor your liver function.
- 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 bleeding

If you have a **fever of 100.5°F (39°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 8 oz. 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 mouth pain, tell your cancer care team. Check with your cancer care team before having any dental work.

- 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.
- Mild constipation may occur after treatment begins. Be sure to drink more fluids and get more 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 first talking with your cancer care team.

- In rare cases, a special problem with nerves called reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS) may occur. Patients may have a headache, nausea, feel sleepy or confused, have a change in eyesight, and have seizures or other problems. This can happen 16 hours to one year after starting Oxaliplatin. Early treatment can help, but delayed treatment can result in more permanent damage. Call your cancer care team if you have any of the symptoms noted above.

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

Sexual health and fertility

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.
- 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.