Tan Tock Seng HOSPITAL

PHARMACY
Drug Information

Procarbazine Capsule

What is Procarbazine Capsule?

- Procarbazine is an anti-cancer drug usually used to treat lymphoma or brain tumour.

How is Procarbazine Administered / Taken?

- Procarbazine is usually taken orally once daily at bedtime, with or without food. Try not to touch the medicine with your bare hands; use the medicine cup provided to take your medicine.
- Swallow them whole with a glass of water. Do not chew or crush the medicines. Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have difficulty swallowing.
- If you miss a dose of Procarbazine, take it as soon as possible if it is within 12 hours of the missed dose. If it is more than 12 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.

Can Procarbazine be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- Avoid tyramine-containing foods such as cheese, smoked or pickled foods, fermented vegetables, overripe fruits, meat extract, yeast extract, tofu and soy products during and up to one week after stopping Procarbazine.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking Procarbazine. Avoid taking too much caffeinated food and drink.
- Always consult your pharmacist or doctor before taking any medicines with Procarbazine including non-prescription medicines.
- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including supplements, traditional or herbal remedies.

What are the Important Side Effects of Procarbazine?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Nausea or vomiting	• Small frequent meals or sucking hard, sugar-free candy may help. Taking Procarbazine at bedtime can help to reduce nausea. • Please remember to take the medicines for nausea or vomiting as instructed by your doctor if any.
Raised blood pressure	• You may need to have your blood pressure checked more regularly while on Procarbazine. Inform your doctor if you are on anti-hypertensives.
Risk of infection may be increased as Procarbazine can reduce the number of white blood cells in your blood	• To reduce risk of infection: - Wash your hands after using the toilet. - Avoid crowds and people who are sick. - Do not share food and avoid taking raw food. • Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience signs of an infection such as fever with a temperature above 38°C, chills, and burning sensation when passing urine. • Do not take Paracetamol (Panadol®) to relieve fever unless instructed by your doctor/ nurse.
Skin rashes	• Inform your doctor if the rash is very irritating. For mild rash, inform your doctor on the next visit as it generally resolves before the next treatment.
Bruising or bleeding may occur as Procarbazine can reduce the number of platelets in your blood	• To reduce risk of bleeding problems: - Try not to bruise, cut or burn yourself. - Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose. - Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. - Be aware that bleeding may take a longer time to stop. • Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience signs of bleeding such as blood in urine or stools, or easy bruising.
Headache, difficulty sleeping, anxiety	• Headache may be relieved by taking Paracetamol (Panadol®). • Inform your doctor if the symptoms bother you.
Secondary cancers	• Do not smoke while on Procarbazine as it may increase your risk of getting lung cancer.

Side Effect	Management
Changes in the way the liver works	• Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience any yellowing of eye white and skin or tea-coloured urine, pale stools or severe abdominal pain.

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There Any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- You must not become pregnant during treatment with Procarbazine and must use an effective method of contraception. You should take appropriate contraceptive measures during and up to 6 months after cessation of treatment. If pregnancy occurs during your treatment, you must inform your doctor immediately.
- Procarbazine may have an anti-fertility effect, which could be irreversible. You should discuss with your doctor regarding fertility preservation prior to starting treatment.
- You should not breast-feed during treatment.

What Else Can I do to Help My Condition?

- Exercise

  Light exercise is recommended as it helps to improve mobility, balance and even emotional well-being. Avoid strenuous exercise, and rest when you are feeling tired.

- Stay positive

  Understand your condition and take an active role in managing it. Do not be afraid to talk about it with your doctor/ pharmacist/ family members. Repressed feelings can be harmful to your immediate well-being and long-term health.

- Adequate hydration

  Maintain adequate hydration with 2 to 3 litres (8 to 12 cups) of fluids per day unless informed by your doctor to restrict fluids. This will decrease your chances of getting constipation and also prevent dehydration.

- Medical and dental treatment

  If you need to go into hospital for any reason other than cancer, always inform the doctors and nurses that you are having chemotherapy.
  Talk to your cancer doctor if you think you need dental treatment. Always inform your dentist that you are having chemotherapy.

How do I Store Procarbazine?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

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