

## PHARMACY

Drug Information

# Brentuximab (Adcetris®) Injection



### What is Brentuximab?

- Brentuximab is used in the treatment of CD 30 positive Hodgkin lymphoma at high risk of relapse or progression as consolidation treatment after a stem cell transplant (SCT).

### How is Brentuximab Administered?

- Brentuximab is administered as an intravenous infusion (into your veins) every 3 weeks.

### Can Brentuximab be Administered With Other Medications?

- 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 Brentuximab?

- Infusion related reactions

These are usually mild or moderate, but rarely, they can be more severe. You may be given drugs before the infusion to reduce the chance of a reaction happening.

*Inform the nurses immediately during infusion of Brentuximab if you experience the following:*

- Flu-like symptoms, such as headache, feeling flushed, having a fever, chills or dizziness
- Red, warm and itchy bumps on the skin
- Swelling in the lips, tongue or throat
- Breathlessness, wheezing, a cough or sudden difficulty breathing
- Chest tightness or chest pain

Rarely, an infusion-related reaction can happen a few hours after treatment. If you develop any of the symptoms above or feel unwell after you get home, please proceed to the A & E department immediately.

- 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small frequent meals or sucking hard, sugar-free candy may help.</li> <li>• Please remember to take the medicines for nausea or vomiting as instructed by your doctor if any.</li> </ul>
Risk of infection may be increased as Brentuximab can reduce the number of white blood cells in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce risk of infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wash your hands after using toilet.</li> <li>- Avoid crowds and people who are sick</li> <li>- Do not share food and avoid taking raw food.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; 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.</li> </ul>
Bruising or bleeding may occur as Brentuximab can reduce the number of platelets in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce risk of bleeding problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Try not to bruise, cut or burn yourself</li> <li>- Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose</li> <li>- Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily</li> <li>- Be aware that bleeding may take a longer time to stop.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience signs of bleeding such as blood in urine or stools, or easy bruising.</li> </ul>
Swelling of the extremities including hand, feet or lower legs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate the legs when sitting and avoid tight clothing.</li> </ul>

Side Effect	Management
Changes in the way the liver works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience any yellowing of eye white and skin or tea-coloured urine, pale stools or severe abdominal pain.</li> </ul>
Numbness and tingling sensation in the hands or feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform your doctor if you experience nerve pain, have trouble buttoning up shirts or you are unable to pick up objects.</li> </ul>
Changes in lung function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience a sudden onset of shortness of breath, cough and/or fever.</li> </ul>
Changes in mood or usual behaviour, confusion, problems thinking, or loss of memory; changes in vision, speech, or walking; or decreased strength or weakness on one side of the body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These could be symptoms of a rare but serious infection of the brain, and may occur within 3 months of stopping treatment.</li> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately.</li> </ul>
Severe and persistent stomach pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This might be a sign of inflammation of the pancreas. Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately.</li> </ul>
Skin pain, followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a rare skin reaction to Brentuximab. Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately.</li> </ul>

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 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.
- Brentuximab 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.

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

