

## PHARMACY

### Drug Information

# Liposomal Doxorubicin Injection



### What is Liposomal Doxorubicin?

- Liposomal Doxorubicin is used to treat breast cancer, ovarian cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma and multiple myeloma.

### How is Liposomal Doxorubicin Administered?

- Liposomal Doxorubicin is usually given as an infusion into a vein (intravenous infusion).

### Can Liposomal Doxorubicin be Administered / Taken with Other Medications?

- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including Traditional Chinese Medicines, Jamu medicines or supplements.

### What are the Important Side Effects of Liposomal Doxorubicin?

- Allergic reaction  
Liposomal Doxorubicin may rarely cause an allergic reaction while it's being given. Signs of a reaction can include a rash, flushing or shortness of breath, swelling of your face or lips, feeling dizzy, having abdominal, back or chest pain or feeling unwell.
- Pain along the vein  
Liposomal Doxorubicin may cause pain along the vein. If you feel pain, tell your nurse straight away so that the infusion site can be checked. They may give the drug more slowly or flush it through with more fluids to reduce pain.
- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Risk of infection can occur as Liposomal Doxorubicin 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 toileting.</li> <li>- Avoid crowds and people who are sick.</li> <li>- Avoid raw food.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Please proceed to the A&amp;E department immediately if you experience signs of</li> </ul>

Side Effect	Management
	infection such as fever with a temperature of 38°C and above, chills and shivering. Avoid taking Paracetamol (Panadol®) to relieve fever. Be aware that taking Paracetamol may mask fever and hence delay treatment of infection.
Bruising or bleeding can occur as Liposomal Doxorubicin 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>- Do not pick your nose.</li> <li>- Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush.</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 any severe or persistent bleeding (eg, passing a large amount of fresh blood in urine or stools, or passing black sticky stools) or significant bruising.</li> </ul>
Nausea or vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take small, frequent meals.</li> <li>Avoid smells that precipitate nausea.</li> <li>Take medicines for nausea or vomiting prescribed by your doctor.</li> <li>Avoid tight-fitting clothes around the waist.</li> </ul>
Mouth ulcers can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat and this can lead to an infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a soft toothbrush.</li> <li>Rinse and brush your dentures after eating and soak them in denture solution overnight.</li> <li>Rinsing your mouth regularly with an alcohol-free mouth gargle or salt water may help reduce chances of infection.</li> </ul>

Side Effect	Management
Harmless red or pinkish discolouration of the urine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is expected as it is the colour of the medicine and will last for one to two days after chemotherapy.</li> </ul>
Hand-foot syndrome may occur during treatment. The palms of hands and soles of your feet may tingle, become red, darken, numb, painful, swollen or creases may be observed. Skin may also become dry or itchy. Nail beds may also darken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform your doctor if blisters, severe pain or ulcers affects your normal daily activities.</li> <li>Avoid tight-fitting shoes.</li> <li>Apply moisturizer to hands and feet.</li> <li>Apply sunscreen with SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30.</li> </ul>
Heart problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may require tests to check how well your heart is working before, during and sometimes after treatment.</li> <li>Please proceed to the A&amp;E department immediately if you experience shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, tightness in chest, chest pain, fast or irregular heart beat or sudden swelling of legs.</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?**

- You must not become pregnant during treatment with Liposomal Doxorubicin and must use an effective method of contraception. You should take appropriate contraceptive measures during and up to six months after stopping treatment. If pregnancy occurs during your treatment, you must inform your doctor immediately.
- Liposomal Doxorubicin 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 two to three 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 receiving anti-cancer treatment.  
Talk to your cancer doctor if you think you need dental treatment. Always inform your dentist that you are receiving anti-cancer treatment.

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

You can also find useful information with regards to your medication on this website:

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support>

