

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.

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

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

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Rituximab Injection



What is Rituximab?

- Rituximab is a specially designed antibody that is usually used to treat certain types of cancer such as non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

How is Rituximab Administered / Taken?

- Rituximab is usually given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous) or into your vein (intravenous).

Can Rituximab 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 Rituximab?

- Infusion related reaction
 - 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.
 - If you do have a reaction, this can usually be treated by slowing or stopping the drip until the reaction is over. Any future infusions will be given at a slower rate.
 - *Inform the nurses immediately during infusion of Rituximab 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 in breathing
 - Chest tightness or chest pain

- Low blood pressure

Blood pressure of some patients may drop during the infusion and you may experience dizziness. If this happens, inform the nurse-in-charge. Your blood pressure will be checked regularly throughout the infusion. If

you normally take medications to lower your blood pressure, please inform the doctor or nurses prior to starting the infusion.

- 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">• Take small, frequent meals.• Avoid smells that precipitate nausea.• Take medications for nausea or vomiting prescribed by your doctor.• Avoid tight-fitting clothes around the waist. |
| Heart problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rituximab may worsen heart problems for people who already have them.• Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience signs of heart problems such as shortness of breath, difficulty in breathing, chest pain, fast heartbeat or sudden swelling of legs. |

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 Rituximab and must use effective contraceptive measures during and up to 12 months after stopping treatment. If pregnancy occurs during your treatment, you must inform your doctor immediately.
- Rituximab 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.