

# Patient Education

## Medication Information



# Vincristine

(*Oncovin*<sup>®</sup>)

## What is Vincristine?

Vincristine is a chemotherapy agent used to treat many types of cancer. Vincristine works by interfering with tumor cell division, which results in tumor cell death.

## How will I receive Vincristine?

Vincristine is given as an injection into your vein (IV).

## What are the common side effects?

Please see chapter 5, “Managing Symptoms at Home,” in the manual.

What You May Expect	What You Should Do
Vincristine may cause <b>burning at the injection site</b> if it leaks under the skin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell your nurse or doctor immediately if you have any burning, pain, redness or swelling while the medication is being infused.</li></ul>
<b>Constipation</b> and <b>abdominal cramping</b> may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the fluid and fiber in your diet.</li><li>• Inform your nurse or doctor as they may recommend a laxative.</li></ul>

<b>Hair loss</b> may occur with Vincristine usually 2 to 3 weeks after starting treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your hair will regrow once your Vincristine treatment is finished.</li><li>• Use a gentle baby shampoo and soft brush. Avoid hair spray, bleaches or perms.</li></ul>
<b>Numbness, tingling, or weakness</b> in your hands and/or feet, similar to when your foot goes to sleep may occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell your nurse or doctor at your next visit as there are other medications that may be helpful in decreasing this side effect.</li></ul>
<b>Nausea and vomiting</b> rarely occurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inform your doctor or nurse if nausea and vomiting is bothersome.</li></ul>

**These are the most common side effects. Others may occur. Please report any problems to your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse.**

**Seek Help Immediately If You Have:**

- Signs of an infection such as fever, chills, cough, pain or burning when you urinate.
- Seizures.

**Contact Your Nurse or Doctor If You Have:**

- Signs of kidney problems such as lower back pain, difficulty or pain with urinating, or swelling of the feet.
- Severe constipation.
- Stomach pain or discomfort.
- Redness, swelling, or pain at the site where the needle was placed.
- Joint pain.

**Special Instructions**

Inform your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse if you are pregnant. Do not breastfeed while receiving Vincristine. Vincristine can damage sperm and may harm a fetus. Use contraception when receiving chemotherapy. Inform your doctor if you have a history of liver or kidney disease.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about any additional questions.

## Questions?

Call \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

## Drug-Drug Interactions

The blood-thinning medication warfarin (Coumadin<sup>®</sup>) may interact with Vincristine. Heart medications such as digoxin (Lanoxin<sup>®</sup>), verapamil (Isoptin<sup>®</sup>), and nifedipine (Procardia<sup>®</sup>) may interact with Vincristine. The anti-seizure medications phenytoin (Dilantin<sup>®</sup>) and carbamazepine (Tegretol<sup>®</sup>) may interact with Vincristine. Inform your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you are taking these or any other medications.

## Drug-Food Interactions

None known at this time.

For more complete information, please request an additional teaching sheet from the National Library of Medicine at [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html), your nurse, pharmacist, or visit the Resource Center.

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*A member of the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, a collaboration of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, the University of Washington and Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center*