

Patient Education

Medication Information



Vincristine

(*Oncovin*[®])

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

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

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[®]) may interact with Vincristine. Heart medications such as digoxin (Lanoxin[®]), verapamil (Isoptin[®]), and nifedipine (Procardia[®]) may interact with Vincristine. The anti-seizure medications phenytoin (Dilantin[®]) and carbamazepine (Tegretol[®]) 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, 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