

Regimen schedule

Next course of treatment, day 22																					
Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Nivolumab	X																				
Karboplatin	X																				
Gemcitabin	X							X													

About your treatment

Each course is 21 days. On days 1 and 8, you will be given IV fluids. After that, there is a break of 13 days, before a new course starts. During treatment, your blood tests and any side effects will be monitored.

Side effects - symptoms and tips

The side effects we list here are the most common and important. They can vary greatly from person to person, and even from time to time. Side effects may determine your dose or require you to stop taking the medicine.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you have any side effects. Often the symptoms can be prevented or alleviated.

Problems with stomach and intestines

Diarrhoea and nausea are common, but you may also become constipated.

You can also get inflammation of the intestines (colitis). It can cause severe diarrhoea, stomach pain, blood in your stools or dark and smelly stools.

Fatigue

Fatigue is common. You may feel low in energy and never rested. Your memory may deteriorate, and you may find it harder to concentrate and solve problems. It can make you feel down, stressed and anxious. You may also find it difficult to socialise. Fatigue may persist for a long time after treatment.

Tips: Try to exercise and move around. It's the only thing known to help with fatigue.

Problems with mouth and mucous membranes

The mucous membranes of your nose, mouth, eyes and abdomen may be affected by your treatment. For example, you may have nosebleeds and a runny nose. In the mouth, you may experience dryness, redness, burning and sores. You can also get fungus, which turns the lining of your mouth red or gives it a white coating. Eyes may become dry and watery. The mucous membranes in the lower abdomen can also become dry.

Tip: If you have a dry mouth, use saliva stimulants available in pharmacies. Rinsing your mouth with Vichy water can prevent fungus. Be attentive to oral hygiene, and use a soft toothbrush and mild toothpaste. Be careful with floss and toothpicks. Inform your dentist of your cancer treatment when you visit. Avoid contact lenses if you have eye problems. Women can use oestrogen cream, emollient cream or oil to treat dry mucous membranes in the lower abdomen.

Pain in muscles and bones

Pain, tenderness and weakness in the muscles are common.

Tips: Can be relieved with common painkillers.

Nausea and taste changes

You may feel unwell from the treatment. You will therefore be given anti-nausea medication in conjunction with the treatment. The medicines may cause constipation. You can get different varieties depending on how you feel. The taste of food and drink may be altered by the treatment.

Tips: Sometimes it feels better to eat lighter food and small portions. For example, try skim milk, yoghurt, omelettes, sandwiches and hot or cold soups. Drinking a little extra between meals can reduce nausea.

Problems with skin, hair and nails

Skin often becomes dry and more sensitive to the sun. You may also lose hair or your hair may change texture. Nails can become brittle.

Tip: When washing your skin, be gentle and use mild soap. Lubricate often with moisturiser. Wear covering clothing to protect against the sun, and sunscreen on parts of your body that you can't cover. Wear gloves for work that is dirty or abrasive for your hands. If your nails are bothering you, you can use nail polish and brush your cuticles with oil or apply a moisturiser.

Dry cough and difficulty breathing

New symptoms of dry cough, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing may be due to a special inflammation of the lungs and airways (pneumonitis).

Hormone changes

You may experience headaches, fatigue, depression, hot flashes, heart palpitations, decreased sexual desire and behavioural changes. You may also experience visual disturbances, such as blurred vision and double vision, and pain behind the eyes. Symptoms may be due to inflammation of the thyroid, adrenal or pituitary glands.

Numbness and tingling - sensory disturbances

You may experience numbness and tingling in your hands and feet, and your fine motor skills may be impaired. For example, you may find it difficult to press buttons or walk. Symptoms usually go away, but not completely in everyone. Tell your doctor or nurse if you have numbness or tingling in your hands and feet.

Infection susceptibility

You will be susceptible to infection after treatment. This is because the level of white blood cells drops. Before each treatment, blood samples are taken to see if the blood cells have recovered. If the values are too low, the treatment must be postponed.

Tips: Try to avoid close contact with people who have a cold or stomach illness, for example. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Hand sanitizer can be useful.

Swollen legs and feet

Swollen legs and feet are common.

Tips: You can use support stockings. Put your feet up on a footstool or rest for a while in bed. Apply a moisturiser to protect your skin, and watch out for sores.

Contact your clinic immediately at:

Acute

- Call 112 in case of persistent acute chest pain, pressure on the chest or difficulty breathing/shortness of breath

Contact your reception immediately at:

- • Fever (temp above 38 degrees) or at a temperature below 36 degrees
- • Sudden deterioration regardless of symptoms
- • Urinary tract infection symptoms or cold symptoms before treatment
- • Severe nausea or burning in the mouth that makes it difficult for you to eat and drink
- • Nosebleeds or other bleeding you cannot stop or bruising over large parts of the body
- • Increased number of stools/diarrhea with or without stomach pain, bloody or black stools
- • New onset dry cough and shortness of breath
- • Severe itching, blisters, oozing sores and peeling skin.
- • If you or your relatives feel that you are changed, confused or that consciousness is affected.
- • Headache, unusual fatigue, pain behind the eyes and visual disturbances.

Common advice

Cancer drugs are usually excreted in the urine up to 7 days after treatment. Therefore, you should avoid splashing urine. Sit down when you pee. When finished, close the toilet lid and flush 2 times. It is important not to get pregnant or make someone pregnant while you are being treated with cancer drugs, as the drugs can affect the foetus. Therefore, use safe contraceptives. Sometimes double protection is needed, as side effects such as diarrhoea or the direct effect of cancer drugs may mean that the contraceptive pill is not enough protection on its own. If you are a man, use a condom during sexual intercourse within 72 hours of treatment, as cytostatic drugs are also excreted through the seminal fluid.

General information about cancer

Useful information about cancer is available from both 1177 Vårdguiden and Cancerfonden:

www.1177.se

www.cancerfonden.se

Notes
