Arroyo Grande Community Hospital
A Dignity Health Member

If you have any questions, **please consult your physician or call AGCH Coastal Cancer Care at 805.481.7245. For emergency, call 911.**

# PATIENT EDUCATION

**Dacarbazine (DTIC)**

## SIDE EFFECTS

**It is important for the patient to follow all prescription instructions carefully. You may experience some, all, or none of the following:**

- **Lowered Blood Counts –** This drug can lower the number of white blood cells produced for fighting infections and also lower your platelets (produced for clotting the blood). During this time you are more susceptible to colds, infections, and bleeding. Occurs 14-28 days after treatment.
- **Nausea/Vomiting –** About 1-2 hours after treatment starts. Can last up to 12 hours. You will be given medication prior to treatment to try and prevent this from occurring.
- **Metallic Taste/Loss of Appetite –** In order to make meals more pleasant, practice good mouth care frequently and before and after meals. Experiment with different seasonings to see which makes food taste better.
- **Flu-like Symptoms –** After a few doses, you may feel like you have the flu – fatigue, muscle aches, and fever. This may last up to10 days following treatment, but rarely.
- **Loss of Hair –** Hair loss is minimal and related to the amount of drug given. Hair will usually grow back after treatment is completed.
- **Burning/Pain Along the Vein –** This drug may cause discomfort along the vein injected, but this can usually be controlled by diluting the drug in a larger volume of fluid or by slowing the rate. You should report ANY discomfort to your nurse.
- **Skin Sensitive –** Skin sensitive to sun exposure especially during first 2 days of therapy. Need to avoid sunlight and wear sunscreens.
- **Fatigue**

## PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**Notify your doctor or nurse immediately if you experience:**

- Signs of Infection: Chills or fever above 100.5°F, new or significant cough, or shortness of breath, pain or burning with urination, a sore that is red and swollen, or white patches in your mouth or on your tongue.
- Signs of Bleeding: Nosebleeds that will not stop with pressure; blood in urine or stool; bleeding gums; unusual bruising; red or purple spots on your body.
- Uncontrolled nausea/vomiting or inability to eat or drink for 24 hours
- Develop redness, swelling, or pain at the injection site
- Shortness of breath, dizziness, excessive fatigue

## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- **Birth Control Measures –** are necessary during and for 4 months after treatment due to potential harm to sperm/egg health.
- **Before any dental procedure, be sure to tell your dentist you are taking this medication.**