

ABOUT your medicine

Gemcitabine is an anti-cancer drug that works by inhibiting DNA synthesis. It is commonly used to treat cancer of the pancreas. It is also used in combination with cisplatin for the treatment of non-small cell lung cancer.

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

HOW is the medicine given?

It is given by slow infusion into a vein.

GEMCITABINE

What are the possible **SIDE-EFFECTS** of the medicine?

- Fatigue, lethargy, weakness
- Fever
- Mild reversible hair loss
- Rashes
- Mild nausea and vomiting
- Stomatitis
- Loss of appetite
- Flu-like symptoms (e.g. muscle ache, fever, chills, fatigue)
- Decrease in platelet count, white blood cell count and red blood cell count which may take place about 7 days after chemotherapy but would increase gradually to normal within 21 days
- Swelling of ankles (usually mild)
- Breathlessness

What **PRECAUTIONS** should I take?

Come back to the hospital if you have:

- A temperature that exceeds 38 degrees Celsius
- Mouth ulcers that do not heal within 3 days
- Excessive vomiting / diarrhoea despite taking medicine
- Unexplained bleeding / bruising

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Keep all medication out of reach of children

Discard all medication that has expired or is no longer required

Come back to the hospital for regular blood test/s as instructed by the doctor.

Maintain adequate hydration (2-3 liters of fluid a day, unless otherwise advised by the doctor) and nutrition (small frequent meals may help).

Report to your doctor if you experience swelling of your ankles or breathlessness.

Be careful when driving or operating machinery because Gemcitabine may cause drowsiness.

Avoid crowds and do not go near people with infections during neutropenic (low white cell count) period.

Avoid half-cooked or uncooked foods. If you wish to take salad or fruits, wash them yourself. There are no other specific food restrictions.

Do not take any alternative medicines without informing your doctor.

Observe oral hygiene. Gargle mouth with water after each meal and use a soft-bristled toothbrush. Avoid hot scalding soups and beverages.

Avoid breast-feeding.

Contraceptive measures are recommended during therapy as this drug may cause harm to the developing baby.

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Information is correct at time of printing and subject to revision without prior notice.

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