Cisplatin

Other Names: Platinol®, platinum

About This Drug

Cisplatin is a drug used to treat cancer. This drug is given in the vein (IV).

Possible Side Effects (More Common)

- This drug may affect how your kidneys work. Your kidney function will be checked as needed.
- Electrolyte changes. Your blood will be checked for electrolyte changes as needed.
- High-frequency hearing loss may occur. You will get IV fluids before and during the Cisplatin infusion to help prevent this. You may also get ringing in the ears.
- Bone marrow depression. This is a decrease in the number of white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This may raise your risk of infection, make you tired and weak (fatigue), and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Nausea and throwing up (vomiting). These symptoms may happen within a few hours after your treatment and may last for a few days to a week. Medicines are available to stop or lessen these side effects.

Possible Side Effects (Less Common)

- Effects on the nerves are called peripheral neuropathy. You may feel numbness or pain in your hands and feet. It may be hard for you to button your clothes, open jars, or walk as usual. The effect on the nerves may get worse with more doses of the drug. These effects get better in some people after the drug is stopped, but it does not get better in all people.
- Blurred vision or other changes in eyesight.
- Soreness of the mouth and throat. You may have red areas, white patches, or sores that hurt.
- Hair loss. You may notice your hair getting thin. Some patients lose their hair. Your hair often grows back when treatment is done.

Allergic Reactions
Allergic reactions to this drug are rare, but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reactions to this drug may be a rash, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, trouble breathing, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way.

Treating Side Effects

- Drink 6-8 cups of fluids each day unless your doctor has told you to limit your fluid intake due to some other health problem. A cup is 8 ounces of fluid. If you throw up or have loose bowel movements you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack water in the body due to losing too much fluid).
- If you have numbness and tingling in your hands and feet, be careful when cooking, walking, and handling sharp objects and hot liquids.
- Mouth care is very important. Your mouth care should consist of routine, gentle cleaning of your teeth or dentures and rinsing your mouth with a mixture of 1/2 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of water or ½ teaspoon of baking soda in 8 ounces of water. This should be done at least after each meal and at bedtime.
- If you have mouth sores, avoid mouthwash that has alcohol. Also avoid alcohol and smoking because they can bother your mouth and throat.
- Talk with your nurse about getting a wig before you lose your hair. Also, call the American Cancer Society at 800-ACS-2345 to find out information about the “Look Good, Feel Better” program close to where you live. It is a free program where women getting chemotherapy can learn about wigs, turbans and scarves as well as makeup techniques and skin and nail care.

Food and Drug Interactions

There are no known interactions of Cisplatin with food. This drug may interact with other medicines. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs and others) that you are taking at this time. The safety and use of dietary supplements and alternative diets are often not known. Using these might affect your cancer or interfere with your treatment. Until more is known, you should not use dietary supplements or alternative diets without your cancer doctor's help.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse **right away** if you have any of these symptoms:

- Rash or itching
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Wheezing or trouble breathing
- Swelling of the face
- Fever of 100.5 F (38 C) or above
- Chills
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Decreased urine
- Weight gain of 5 pounds in one week (fluid retention)
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day

Call your doctor or nurse **as soon as possible** if you have these symptoms:

- Numbness, tingling, decreased feeling or weakness in fingers, toes, arms, or legs
- Trouble walking or changes in the way you walk, feeling clumsy when buttoning clothes, opening jars, or other routine hand motions
- Blurred vision or other changes in eyesight
- Changes in hearing, ringing in the ears
- Pain in your mouth or throat that makes it hard to eat or drink
- Fatigue that interferes with your daily activities

Sexual Problems and Reproductive Concerns

- **Infertility warning:** Sexual problems and reproduction concerns may occur. In both men and women, this drug may affect your ability to have children. This cannot be determined before your treatment. Speak with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.
  - In men, this drug may interfere with your ability to make sperm, but it should not change your ability to have sexual relations.
  - In women, menstrual bleeding may become irregular or stop while you are receiving this drug. Do not assume that you cannot become pregnant if you do not have a menstrual period.
  - Women may experience signs of menopause like vaginal dryness, itching, and pain during sexual relations
  - Genetic counseling is available for you to talk about the effects of this drug therapy on future pregnancies. Also, a genetic counselor can look at the possible risk of problems in the unborn baby due to this medicine if an exposure happens during pregnancy.

- **Pregnancy warning:** The drug may have harmful effects on the unborn child, so effective methods of birth control should be used during your cancer treatment.
- **Breast feeding warning:** Women should not breast feed during treatment because this drug could enter the breast milk and badly harm a breast feeding baby.

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