

Ifosfamide (Ifex)

About This Medicine

Ifosfamide is used to treat cancer. It is given in the vein (IV).

Possible Side Effects

- Decrease in the number of white blood cells and red blood cells. This may raise your risk of infection and make you feel more tired.
- Nausea and throwing up (vomiting)
- Infection
- Changes in your central nervous system can happen. The central nervous system is made up of your brain and spinal cord. You could feel extreme tiredness, agitation, confusion, have hallucinations (see or hear things that are not there), have trouble understanding or speaking, loss of control of your bowels or bladder, eyesight changes, numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body, seizures or coma. **If you start to have any of these symptoms let your doctor know right away.**
- Blood in your urine
- Hair loss. Hair loss is often temporary, although with certain medicine, hair loss can sometimes be permanent. Hair loss may happen suddenly or gradually. If you lose hair, you may lose it from your head, face, armpits, pubic area, chest, and/or legs. You may also notice your hair getting thin.

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 10% or greater of patients treated with Ifosfamide. All possible side effects are not included. Your side effects may be different depending on your cancer diagnosis, condition, or if you are receiving other medicines in combination. Please discuss any concerns or questions with your medical team.

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe bone marrow suppression. 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, and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Risk of severe and life-threatening infections
- Severe changes in your central nervous system, which can be life-threatening
- Effects on the bladder. This medicine may cause irritation and bleeding in the bladder. You may have blood in your urine.
- Changes in your kidney function, which can cause kidney failure and be life-threatening

- Changes in your heart function, which can be life-threatening such as abnormal electrocardiogram (EKG/ECG), inflammation (swelling) in the tissue of the heart, and congestive heart failure - your heart is not pumping blood as well as it should be, and fluid can build up in your body.
- Changes in your liver function and blockage of small veins in the liver, which can cause liver failure and be life-threatening.
- Thickening and/or inflammation of the lung tissues, which can be life-threatening. You may have a dry cough or trouble breathing.
- This medicine may raise your risk of getting a second cancer, such as leukemia, lymphoma, thyroid cancer or sarcoma.
- Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, are rare but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reaction to this medicine may be swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, do not take another dose of this medicine. You should get urgent medical treatment.**
- Slow wound healing

Note: Some of the side effects above are very rare. These side effects may be more severe if you are receiving high doses of this medication included in pre-transplant chemotherapy. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.

Important Information

- Cytotoxic medicines leave the body through urine and stool, but they can also be present in other body fluids such as blood, vomit, semen, and vaginal fluids. Take precautions to prevent others from coming in contact with your medicine or your body fluids. Follow safety precautions during your treatment and for as long as directed by your health care provider after your treatment. If you take a cytotoxic pill each day, follow these precautions every day.
- Your doctor may recommend that you drink extra fluids during or after your treatment to flush your bladder and urinate often to help decrease the risk of the effects on your bladder.
- Ifosfamide may cause slow wound healing. If you must have emergency surgery or have an accident that results in a wound, tell the doctor that you are on ifosfamide.
- This medicine may impair your ability to drive or use machinery. Use caution and talk to your doctor and/or nurse about any precautions you may need to take.

Treating Side Effects

- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- To decrease the risk of infection, wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid close contact with people who have a cold, the flu, or other infections.
- Take your temperature as your doctor or nurse tells you, and whenever you feel like you may have a fever.
- To help decrease the risk of bleeding, use a soft toothbrush. Check with your nurse before using dental floss.
- Be very careful when using knives or tools.



- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine pale yellow.
- If you throw up or have diarrhea, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid).
- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your nurse or doctor about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help stop or lessen these symptoms.
- To help with hair loss, wash with a mild shampoo and avoid washing your hair every day. Avoid coloring your hair.
- Avoid rubbing your scalp, pat your hair or scalp dry.
- Limit your use of hair spray, electric curlers, blow dryers, and curling irons.
- If you are interested in getting a wig, talk to your nurse and they can help you get in touch with programs in your local area.

Food and Medicine Interactions

- Avoid grapefruit or grapefruit juice while taking this medicine. Grapefruit and grapefruit juice may raise the levels of ifosfamide in your body. This could make side effects worse.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all other prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) you are taking before starting this medicine as there are known medicine interactions with ifosfamide. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.
- Avoid the use of St. John's Wort while taking ifosfamide as this may lower the levels of the medicine in your body, which can make it less effective.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher
- Chills
- Extreme tiredness, agitation, or confusion
- Blurry vision or changes in your eyesight
- Ringing in the ear
- Loss of hearing
- Symptoms of a seizure such as confusion, blacking out, passing out, loss of hearing or vision, blurred vision, unusual smells, or tastes (such as burning rubber), trouble talking, tremors or shaking in parts or all of the body, repeated body movements, tense muscles that do not relax, and loss of control of urine and bowels. **If you or your family member suspects you are having a seizure, call 911 right away.**
- Hallucinations
- Trouble understanding or speaking
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities



- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Loss of control of bowels or bladder
- Numbness or lack of strength to your arms, legs, face, or body
- Dry cough
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing
- Feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way (palpitations)
- Pain in your chest
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Pain when passing urine; blood in urine
- Decreased or very dark urine or difficulty urinating
- Swelling of the legs, feet, or ankles
- Weight gain of 5 pounds in one week (fluid retention)
- Signs of infection: fever or chills, cough, trouble breathing, severe pain in your abdomen, difficulty urinating, burning or pain when you pass urine, redness and/or swelling of the skin
- Signs of allergic reaction: swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**
- Signs of possible liver problems: dark urine, pale bowel movements, pain in your abdomen, feeling very tired and weak, unusual itching, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- If you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This medicine can have harmful effects on the unborn baby. Women of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment. Men with female partners of childbearing potential should use effective methods of birth control during your cancer treatment and for 6 months after stopping treatment. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner.
- In women, menstrual bleeding may become irregular or stop while you are getting this medicine. Do not assume that you cannot become pregnant if you do not have a menstrual period.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** Women should not breastfeed during treatment because this medicine could enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** In men and women both, this medicine may affect your ability to have children in the future. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.

Revised September 2023

