

## Mesna (Mesnex)

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### About This Medicine

Mesna is given to prevent bladder irritation and bleeding that certain chemotherapy agents often cause. It is given in the vein (IV) or orally (by mouth).

### Possible Side Effects

- 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
- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Constipation (unable to move bowels)
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Pain in your abdomen
- Tiredness and weakness
- Fever
- Decreased appetite (decreased hunger)
- Headache
- Feeling very sleepy
- 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 greater than 10% of patients treated with mesna given in combination with a chemotherapy agent. 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

- 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.**



- Severe allergic skin reaction. You may develop blisters on your skin that are filled with fluid or a severe red rash all over your body that may be painful.

**Note:** Some of the side effects above are very rare. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.

## Important Information

- Drink plenty of fluids (1 to 2 liters) after your treatment to flush your bladder.
- This medicine may interfere with some lab tests resulting in false-positive or false-negative results. Check with your doctor prior to getting any lab tests done.

## How to Take Your Medicine

- **For oral use only:** Swallow the medicine exactly as directed by your doctor.
- **Missed dose:** If you vomit a dose within 2 hours of taking your medicine, or you miss a dose, contact your doctor right away for further instructions.
- **Handling:** Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling your medicine, your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- **Storage:** Store tablets in the original container at room temperature. Discuss with your nurse or your doctor how to dispose of unused medicine.

## 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).
- If you have diarrhea, eat low-fiber foods that are high in protein and calories and avoid foods that can irritate your digestive tracts or lead to cramping.
- Ask your nurse or doctor about medicine that can lessen or stop your diarrhea and/or constipation.
- If you are not able to move your bowels, check with your doctor or nurse before you use enemas, laxatives, or suppositories.



- 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 decreased appetite, eat small, frequent meals. Eat foods high in calories and protein, such as meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, tofu, eggs, nuts, milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, pudding, and nutritional supplements.
- Consider using sauces and spices to increase taste. Daily exercise, with your doctor's approval, may increase your appetite.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry. Ask your doctor for medicine if your rash bothers you.
- 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.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your wellbeing. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.

## Food and Medicine Interactions

- There are no known interactions of mesna with food.
- This medicine may interact with other medicines. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) that you are taking at this time. 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.

## 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
- Tiredness and/or weakness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Headache that does not go away
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- No bowel movement in 3 days or when you feel uncomfortable
- Pain in your abdomen that does not go away



- Lasting loss of appetite or rapid weight loss of five pounds in a week
- Blood in your urine, or pinkish/reddish urine
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and tiredness
- A new rash or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- 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.**
- If you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner

## Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** It is not known if this medicine may harm an unborn child. Mesna is usually given in combination with other medicines. For this reason, you should refer to the medicine guide of any other medicines you may be receiving for more specific information and be sure to talk with your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while receiving this medicine. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant or may have impregnated your partner.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** It is not known if this medicine passes into breast milk. Mesna is usually given in combination with other medicines. For this reason, you should refer to the medicine guide of any other medicines you may be receiving for more specific information and be sure to talk with your doctor about the risks and benefits of breastfeeding during treatment with this medicine because it may enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** Fertility studies have not been done with this medicine. Mesna is usually given in combination with other medicines. For this reason, you should refer to the medicine guide of any other medicines you may be receiving for more specific information and be sure to talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.

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