

# Medical Oncology

## Drug Information Sheet

**Doxorubicin (Adriamycin):** a drug to treat your cancer.

**How will you get this drug?** A Cancer Care nurse will give this drug to you through an IV or your port.

You MAY OR MAY NOT experience the side effects listed below.

<b>Possible Side Effects:</b>	<b>What to do:</b>
<b>Increased risk for infection due to decreased blood counts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid contact with people who have infections, colds or flu.</li> <li>• Wash your hands often.</li> <li>• Report chills or a fever of 100.4° or higher to your doctor right away, day or night.</li> <li>• Report any signs or symptoms of infection, such as cough, burning with urination, skin redness or sores.</li> <li>• Call your doctor before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.</li> </ul>
<b>Increased risk for bleeding due to decreased blood counts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report signs of bleeding or bruising.</li> <li>• Avoid taking aspirin or aspirin products unless your doctor tells you to take it.</li> <li>• Use soft toothbrush.</li> <li>• Use electric razor.</li> <li>• Talk to your doctor before any scheduled medical or dental procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Nausea/vomiting Decreased appetite</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take nausea medicine as instructed. Let your doctor know if it is not working for you.</li> <li>• Eat smaller, frequent meals.</li> <li>• Try liquid nutritional supplements (Boost, Ensure)</li> <li>• A dietitian is available to talk with you.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Doxorubicin (Adriamycin) can affect your heart muscle.</i></b> There is a limit to how much <i>Doxorubicin (Adriamycin)</i> you should receive in your lifetime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your doctor will monitor and manage how much <i>Doxorubicin (Adriamycin)</i> you will receive in your lifetime.</li> <li>• Report to nurse or doctor if you have shortness of breath, chest pain, or swelling in your ankles.</li> <li>• Routine scans of your heart will be done during treatment.</li> <li>• Heart problems may happen months to years after <i>Doxorubicin (Adriamycin)</i> therapy.</li> </ul>
<b>Stinging or burning if drug gets out of vein</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell your nurse <b>right away</b>, if you have redness, burning, pain, swelling, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your body.</li> <li>• The drug can cause severe damage to the tissue at the IV site.</li> </ul>
<b>Change in the color of your urine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may have orange or red colored urine for 1 to 2 days</li> <li>• Tell your doctor if it does not stop in a few days, or if you see what looks like blood or blood clots in your urine.</li> </ul>
<b>Hair loss</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to your nurse about a wig or other options.</li> <li>• Ask about options to help decrease hair loss.</li> <li>• Hair will grow back 1-3 months after stopping chemotherapy.</li> </ul>

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<b>Possible Side Effects:</b>	<b>What to do:</b>
<p><b><i>Doxorubicin (Adriamycin)</i> will be in urine and stool for 48 hours.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caregivers will need to handle soiled linens and clothing wearing gloves or using a bag as a barrier.</li> <li>• Keep your soiled items separate from others' dirty laundry and wash right away.</li> <li>• Women who are pregnant should not handle your soiled clothing or linens.</li> <li>• Wash any skin that body waste has touched with soap and water.</li> <li>• You may use the same toilet that you normally use.</li> <li>• If the toilet or toilet seat becomes dirty with urine, stool or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet</li> <li>• Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet.</li> <li>• <b>It is safe to hug and kiss.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Avoid pregnancy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.</li> <li>• Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug and for <b>6</b> months after stopping this drug.</li> <li>• If you or your sex partner gets pregnant while taking this drug or within <b>6</b> months after stopping this drug, call your doctor right away.</li> <li>• May cause fertility problems.</li> </ul>

<b>Less common side effects that may happen</b>	<b>What to do:</b>
<p><b>Increased risk for bad bone marrow problems or secondary cancer (Leukemia or myelodysplastic syndrome)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to your doctor about your concerns.</li> <li>• Be sure your family doctor knows you have received chemotherapy medicine.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Liver problems</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lab results will be monitored.</li> <li>• Call your doctor if you have:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ dark urine (tea colored)</li> <li>○ severe right sided stomach pain</li> <li>○ light colored stools</li> <li>○ bruising or if you start to bleed easily</li> <li>○ yellowing of skin or eyes</li> <li>○ severe nausea or throwing up</li> <li>○ unexplained weight gain</li> <li>○ your belly feels big or bloated</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<p><b>Less common side effects that may happen</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>What to do:</u></b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Skin problems in areas where you had radiation</b> (weeks to years in the past)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ rash that looks like a sunburn in an area that was treated with radiation</li> <li>○ acne</li> <li>○ blisters that ooze or peel</li> <li>○ itching or swelling</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Choose mild soaps.</li> <li>• Use sunscreen</li> <li>• Wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stomatitis</b> Sores in your throat or mouth (stomatitis) may occur a few days or a few weeks after medicine is given.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let your nurse or doctor know if you have sores in your mouth.</li> <li>• Avoid spicy, hot or cold foods.</li> <li>• Avoid using tobacco products, alcohol, and mouthwashes that contain alcohol.</li> <li>• Mix 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda and 1/8 teaspoon of salt with 2 cups of water. Rinse your mouth and gargle the mixture at least four times daily, especially after you eat. Do not swallow this mixture, just rinse and spit.</li> <li>• Use a soft toothbrush.</li> <li>• Your doctor may prescribe a special mouthwash for you to use.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nail changes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Darkening and ridging of fingernails may happen. It will go away when the treatment is finished.</li> <li>• Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ redness, swelling, peeling, or tenderness around nails of hands or feet</li> <li>○ any skin redness, itching, or rash</li> <li>○ draining fluid from your nail</li> <li>○ a hard time walking or using your hands</li> <li>○ chills or a fever of 100.4° F or higher</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take care of your nails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keep nails trimmed and clean</li> <li>○ Do not cut nails too short</li> <li>○ Do not bite, pick or tear at your nails or cuticles</li> <li>○ Do not cut your cuticles</li> <li>○ Apply moisturizing lotion often</li> <li>○ Avoid using hot water</li> <li>○ Avoid standing for long times</li> <li>○ Wear gloves to wash dishes</li> <li>○ Wear comfortable shoes with soft cotton socks to prevent injuries</li> <li>○ Do not use artificial nails</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor.</b></p>	