

Medical Oncology

Drug Information Sheet

Gemcitabine (Gemzar, Infugem): a drug to treat your cancer.

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

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

Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Increased risk for infection due to decreased blood counts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid contact with people who have infections, colds or flu. • Wash your hands often. • Report chills or a fever of 100.4° or higher to your doctor right away, day or night. • Report any signs or symptoms of infection, such as cough, burning with urination, skin redness or sores. • Call your doctor before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.
Increased risk for bleeding due to decreased blood counts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report signs of bleeding or bruising. • Avoid taking aspirin or aspirin products unless your doctor tells you to take it. • Use soft toothbrush. • Use electric razor. • Talk to your doctor before any scheduled medical or dental procedures.
Lower than normal red blood cells Anemia	Call you doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ shortness of breath with activity ○ fatigue ○ dizziness ○ fast heartbeat or a heartbeat that does not feel normal ○ headache
Nausea/vomiting Decreased appetite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take nausea medicine as instructed. Let your doctor know if it is not working for you. • Eat smaller, frequent meals. • Try liquid nutritional supplements (Boost, Ensure) • A dietitian is available to talk with you.
Liver problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab results will be monitored. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dark urine (tea colored) ○ severe right sided stomach pain ○ light colored stools ○ bruising or if you start to bleed easily ○ yellowing of skin or eyes ○ severe nausea or throwing up ○ unexplained weight gain ○ your belly feels big or bloated

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Skin rash or itching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use moisturizing lotions to keep skin hydrated after bathing. • Use tepid water, rather than hot water. • Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing. • Use over-the-counter anti-inflammation and anti-itch creams (hydrocortisone cream or diphenhydramine). • Apply cool, wet cloth to soothe skin. • Avoid using perfumes and cologne. • Avoid rubbing and scratching. • Drink water and non-caffeine beverages. • Notify your doctor of rash, itching or swelling. This may occur on the face and can be around your eyes.
Blood or protein in your urine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foamy or bubbly urine ○ Blood in your urine ○ More frequent urination ○ Shortness of breath ○ Swelling in the face, belly, feet or ankles ○ Muscle cramping at night ○ Puffiness around the eyes, especially in the morning • Drink 6-8 glasses of water and non-caffeine beverages a day.
Fever (within 6 hours of first dose)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink non-caffeine fluids to stay well hydrated. • Report chills or a fever of 100.4° or higher to your doctor right away, day or night. • Report any signs or symptoms of infection, such as cough, burning with urination, skin redness or sores. • Call your doctor before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.
<i>Gemcitabine (Gemzar; Infugem) medicine will be in urine and stool for 48 hours.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers will need to handle soiled linens and clothing wearing gloves or using a bag as a barrier. • Keep your soiled items separate from others' dirty laundry and wash right away. • Women who are pregnant should not handle your soiled clothing or linens. • Wash any skin that body waste has touched with soap and water. • You may use the same toilet that you normally use. • If the toilet or toilet seat becomes dirty with urine, stool or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet • Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet. • It is safe to hug and kiss.

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Avoid pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug and for 6 months after stopping this drug. • If you or your sex partner gets pregnant while taking this drug or within 6 months after stopping this drug, call your doctor right away. • May cause fertility problems.

Less common side effects that may happen	What to do:
Fluid Leaks from bloodstream into tissues - Capillary Leak Syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Irritability ○ Stuffy nose ○ Cough ○ Fatigue ○ Nausea ○ Pain in your belly ○ Headache ○ Swelling of arms and legs
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	<p>Call your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ become very tired or weak ○ have any signs of bleeding or bruising ○ notice a change in the color of your urine ○ notice a change in how much urine is passed ○ have a fever ○ have swelling of the face, hands, feet or body
Breathing problems Sometimes severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call your doctor right away if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ severe shortness of breath or trouble breathing ○ labored and unusually rapid breathing ○ new or dry cough or a cough that gets worse ○ confusion ○ extreme tiredness ○ wheezing ○ chest pain • Call 911 if you cannot catch your breath or stop coughing.

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Less common side effects that may happen	<u>What to do:</u>
Serious allergic reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the nurse right away for unusual feelings, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ hot or flushed face and neck ○ fever ○ chills ○ pain in the abdomen or back ○ trouble breathing or wheezing ○ chest tightness ○ swelling of your face, lips, or tongue ○ a rash ○ itching ○ hives ○ cough ○ runny or stuffy nose • Call 911 and go to the Emergency Department right away if you have any symptoms after you return home
PRES/RPLS Rare swelling in the back part of the brain	Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ loss of eyesight ○ confusion ○ headache ○ lethargy ○ seizure ○ visual or neurologic disturbances
These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor.	