

“It always pays off to stay informed on your medication and how it affects you!”

— BMT Survivor

CHAPTER 10



Medications Commonly Used in Blood and Marrow Stem Cell Transplantation

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This section will discuss common medications you will be taking as part of your transplant process. **Keep in mind that many of the medications listed are not necessarily going to be prescribed to you.** Chemotherapy to prepare for transplant is unique to you and your disease. A variety of medication may be prescribed to you specific to your symptoms or the complications you may encounter during your treatment. Other medicines may be given to prevent complications such as infection or graft-versus-host disease. These meds may be taken by mouth, injected under the skin or in a vein. We encourage you to make a list of your home medications and ask questions regarding each and every medication you may be taking. We will be reviewing all of your home medications with you each time you come to your clinic visit.

During your stay in the hospital, your doctor will prescribe all necessary medications. Please leave any previously prescribed medications at home. If you bring your home medications with you, please let your nurse know and we will store them until you are discharged. You may not keep any medications in the room with you.

These are commonly used chemotherapy medications. Your doctor may prescribe one or more of these medications.

Abelcet/ABLC

An antifungal used to treat fungal or mold type infections. It is administered intravenously. Common side effects include allergic reactions, decreased blood counts, fever, chills, joint and muscle pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, headache, dizziness.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

Used as a pre-medication for blood products or some medications, to reduce fever and as a mild pain reliever. Does not usually have an adverse side effect in recommended doses. High doses or long-term use may cause liver and kidney damage.

Acetazolamide (Diamox)

A diuretic used to get rid of extra fluid in your body. Can be taken orally or IV. Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness and low-potassium.

Acyclovir (Zovirax)

An antiviral used to prevent/treat herpes simplex, herpes zoster (shingles) and varicella (chickenpox) viral infections. Common side effects include headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Albumin

A blood derivative used to maintain blood volume and protein levels in the blood. Common side effects include allergic reactions, fever, chills, nausea and low blood pressure.

Allopurinol

Used to decrease uric acid in the blood and prevent side effects of certain chemotherapy drugs. Also used to treat gout. Drink plenty of fluids while on this medication. Common side effects are skin rash or other allergic reactions, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Ambisome (see Abelcet/ABLC)**Anti-thymocyte globulin (Atgam, ATG)**

An immune suppressing drug used to treat graft-versus-host disease and aplastic anemia. Common side effects include allergic reactions, decreased blood counts, fever, chills, joint and muscle pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, headache and dizziness.

Cefazolin (Ancef)

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections. Common side effects include pain at peripheral IV site (IV in your hand or arm), diarrhea and allergic reaction.

Ceftazidime (Fortaz)

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections. Common side effects include pain at peripheral IV site (IV in your hand or arm), diarrhea and allergic reaction.

Clindamycin (Cleocin)

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections. Common side effects include diarrhea, mild nausea (oral only), allergic reaction and pain at peripheral IV site (IV in your hand or arm).

Clonidine* (Catapres)

A drug used to treat high blood pressure. Also used to avoid side effects when stopping or decreasing certain pain medications. Can be taken orally or as a patch applied to the skin. Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth and constipation.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Codeine

An analgesic (pain reliever) used for management of mild to moderate pain. Also used to suppress nonproductive cough. Common side effects include drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, constipation and dry mouth. May also be used to control severe diarrhea.

Cyclosporin A* (Sandimmune, Neoral, CSA)

An immune suppressing drug used to prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. Common side effects include decreased kidney function, tremors, abnormal hair growth, high blood pressure, low magnesium and increased risk of infection.

** Drink plenty of fluids. Mix liquid form with chocolate milk or juice. Do not take with grapefruit juice or apple juice.*

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

An antihistamine used to prevent/treat allergic reactions to medications and blood products. Also used to prevent or treat nausea. Common side effects include drowsiness and dry mouth.

Diphenoxylate with atropine* (Lomotil)

Used to control diarrhea. It is taken orally. Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, constipation, nausea and vomiting.

Dopamine (Intropin)

Used to increase circulation (blood flow) to kidneys to improve kidney function. Also used to help heart function and increase blood pressure in times of stress or shock. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, angina (chest pain), palpitation, headache and shortness of breath.

Enalapril (Vasotec)

An antihypertensive drug used to treat high blood pressure and other heart conditions. It is administered orally or IV. Common side effects include dizziness, dry cough, rash and high potassium.

Erythromycin

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections. It can be taken orally or IV. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping and allergic reactions.

Famotidine (Pepcid)

An acid reducer medication used to decrease stomach acid to prevent or treat stomach ulcers. A common side effect is headache.

Fentanyl* (Duragesic)

An analgesic used in the management of moderate to severe pain. It is most often used as a patch applied to the skin. Side effects include mild nausea/vomiting, drowsiness, constipation, dry mouth, itching and difficulty urinating.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Filgrastim (Neupogen, G-CSF)

A hematopoietic (blood forming) agent used to speed up the recovery of blood counts, especially white blood cells (WBCs), and decrease the chance of infection after chemotherapy. Also used before stem cell collections to increase WBCs. Common side effects include bone pain, chills and fever.

Fluconazole (Diflucan)

An antifungal used to prevent or treat fungal infection. A common side effect is mild nausea and headache.

Folic acid (Folvite, Folate)

It is a B vitamin that aids in bone marrow maturation, helping the body make healthy red blood cells. A side effect may be allergic reaction, but this is uncommon.

Foscarnet Sodium (Foscavir)

An antiviral used to prevent/treat cytomegalovirus, or CMV, infections. It is given IV. Common side effects include decreased kidney function, inability to pass urine, tremors, numbness or tingling of hands or feet, headache, seizures, low potassium, low magnesium, low calcium, skin rash, itching and decreased blood counts.

Furosemide* (Lasix)

A diuretic “water pill” used to get rid of extra fluid in your body or treat high blood pressure. Common side effects include low blood pressure, dizziness, headache, nausea, low potassium and low calcium.

**If you have a sulfonamide (“sulfa”) allergy, talk with health care provider before taking this medication.*

Ganciclovir (Cytovene, DHPG)

An antiviral used to prevent/treat cytomegalovirus, or CMV, infections. If taken orally, take with food. Drink plenty of liquids. Common side effects include decreased white blood cell and platelet counts, decreased kidney function, nausea and vomiting.

Gentamicin

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain bacterial infections. It is usually given IV or IM (injection into the muscle). Common side effects include decreased kidney function, ringing in the ears, hearing loss and dizziness.

Granisetron (Kytril)

An antiemetic (antinausea) medicine used to prevent/treat nausea and vomiting. Common side effects include headache and constipation.

Hydrocodone with acetaminophen* (Vicodin, Norco, Lortab)

An analgesic (pain reliever) used in the management of moderate to severe pain. Take with food to prevent stomach upset. Common side effects include drowsiness, urinary retention, slow breathing, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Hydrocortisone* (Cortef, Solu-Cortef)

An immune suppressor used as premedication for blood products and/or other medications to decrease the chance of developing an allergic reaction. Common side effects include sodium and fluid retention, stomach upset, insomnia, high blood sugar and risk of infection.

** Avoid people with infections, colds or flu.*

** Take this medicine in the morning, if taking once a day.*

** Take tablet with food to prevent stomach upset.*

Hydromorphone* (Dilaudid)

An analgesic (pain reliever) used in the management of moderate to severe pain. It can be taken orally or given IV. If taken orally, take with food to prevent stomach upset. Common side effects include drowsiness, urinary retention, slow breathing, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Immune Globulin (Gammagard, Carimune, Gamunex, IVIG)

An immune stimulator providing antibodies (a disease fighting component of the blood) to prevent certain infections and acute graft-versus-host disease. It is given IV. Common side effects include fever, chills, nausea, low blood pressure and shortness of breath.

Labetolol* (Trandate, Normodyne)

An antihypertensive used to treat high blood pressure. Common side effects include dizziness and drowsiness.

** Rise slowly over several minutes from sitting or lying position.*

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Levofloxacin (Levaquin)

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain bacterial infections. If taken orally, do not take dairy products or mineral supplements within two hours. Common side effects include mild nausea and slight dizziness.

Loperamide* (Imodium)

A medication used to control diarrhea. It is taken orally. Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, blurry vision, dry mouth and constipation.

** Do not take more than eight per day.*

Lorazepam (Ativan)

A medication used to prevent/treat nausea or vomiting, treat anxiety or used to calm you before a medical procedure. Common side effects include drowsiness, feeling lightheaded or having blurred vision.

** Avoid driving.*

Magnesium (Slow Mag, Magnesium Plus Protein)

Magnesium is a mineral supplement. A common side effect is diarrhea.

Medroxyprogesterone (Provera)

A hormonal agent used to prevent blood loss by suppressing menstrual periods in female patients. It is taken orally. Common side effects include mild nausea, breakthrough bleeding and breast tenderness.

Meperidine (Demerol)

A drug used as a premedication for certain medications and blood products to prevent or treat chills. Common side effects include drowsiness, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

Mesna (Mesnex)

A drug used to prevent/treat hemorrhagic cystitis (irritation and bleeding of the bladder) caused by the chemotherapy drugs ifosfamide (Ifex) and cyclophosphamide (Cytosan). Common side effects include a bad taste in the mouth and diarrhea.

Methadone*(Dolophine)

An analgesic (pain reliever) used in the management of moderate to severe pain. If taken orally, take with food to prevent stomach upset. Common side effects include drowsiness, feeling lightheaded, sleepiness, having blurred vision, urinary retention, slow breathing, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Methotrexate (MTX, Rheumatrex; Trexall)

A drug used to prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. Common side effects include mouth sores, low blood counts, nausea and vomiting.

Methylprednisolone* (Solu-Medrol, MPSLE)

An immune suppressor drug (steroid) used to decrease inflammation and prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. If taken orally, take with food or milk to prevent stomach upset. Common side effects include increased appetite, weight gain, mood changes, acne, stomach irritation, ulcers, increased facial and body hair, muscle weakness, increased risk of infection, insomnia, high blood sugar and fluid retention.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Metoclopramide* (Reglan)

An antiemetic (anti-nausea) medication used to prevent/treat nausea and vomiting. Common side effects include headache, drowsiness, fatigue and weakness.

**Take this medicine 30 minutes before meals.*

Metoprolol* (Lopressor)

A medication used to treat high blood pressure and other heart conditions. Common side effects include drowsiness, dizziness and slow heartbeat.

** Rise slowly over several minutes from sitting or lying position.*

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Metronidazole* (Flagyl)

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections, including infectious diarrhea. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, metallic taste in your mouth and change in color of urine to black or brown.

** Avoid alcohol (including wine, beer and liquor). Drinking alcohol may cause cramps, nausea, headaches and flushing.*

Morphine* (MS Contin, MSIR, Roxanol, Kadian)

An analgesic (pain reliever) used for the management of moderate to severe pain. If taken orally, take with food to prevent stomach upset. Common side effects include drowsiness, urinary retention, slow breathing, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Mycophenolate mofetil* (CellCept, MMF)

An immune suppressor used to prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. It can be taken orally or given IV. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, low blood counts, high blood pressure and increased risk of infection.

Nifedipine (Procardia, Procardia XL, Adalat CC)

A medication used to treat high blood pressure and other heart conditions. Common side effects include dizziness, rapid heartbeat, water retention, headache and flushing and constipation.

Nystatin (Nilstat)

An antifungal used to prevent/treat fungal infections in the mouth or throat (thrush). Taken orally, the solution is swished around in your mouth and swallowed. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and rash.

(Mycostatin)

An antifungal used to treat vaginal fungal infections. Taken as a vaginal suppository.

Ondansetron (Zofran, Zofran ODT)

An antiemetic (antinausea) medication used to prevent/treat nausea and vomiting. It can be taken orally or given IV. Common side effects include diarrhea headache and constipation.

ODT: Oral-disintegrating tablet

Place on tongue and let dissolve. Water is not needed.

Oxacillin

A penicillin derived antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain bacterial infections. Common side effects include allergic reaction, pain at peripheral IV site, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Penicillin G

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain bacterial infections. Common side effects include allergic reaction, pain at peripheral IV site, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Phenazopyridine (Pyridium ReAzo [OTC]; UTI Relief [OTC])

This medication is used to decrease the pain and discomfort of urination during a bladder infection. It is taken orally. Take with food and increase fluid intake. Common side effects include reddish/orange colored stool and urine, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache and yellow discoloration of the eyes. May stain contact lenses.

Prednisone*

An immune suppressor (steroid) used to decrease inflammation and prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. Take with milk or food to decrease stomach upset. Common side effects include increased appetite, weight gain, mood changes, acne, stomach irritation, ulcers, increased facial and body hair, muscle weakness, increased risk of infection, sleep disturbances and fluid retention.

** Do not stop this medication suddenly or without your doctor's knowledge.*

Procardia XL (see Nifedipine)

A long acting form of Nifedipine.

Prochlorperazine (Compazine)

An antiemetic (antinausea) medication used to prevent/treat nausea and vomiting. Common side effects include drowsiness, dry mouth, low blood pressure, tremors and muscle tightness and constipation.

Rabeprazole (AcipHex)

An acid reducer used to decrease stomach acid to prevent or treat stomach ulcers. A side effect may be headache, although it is uncommon.

Sargramostim (Leukine, GM-CSF)

A hematopoietic (blood forming) agent used to speed up the recovery of blood counts, especially white blood cells (WBCs), and decrease the chance of infection after chemotherapy. Also used before stem cell collections to increase WBCs. Common side effects include bone pain, chills and fever.

Septra (see Sulfamethoxazole/ trimethoprim)**Sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim (Bactrim, Septra)**

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections, including pneumocystis jiroveci (formerly called pneumocystis carinii) pneumonia. If taken orally, take with plenty of water. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, skin/allergic reactions, light sensitivity and low blood counts.

Tacrolimus (Prograf, FK506)

An immune suppressor used to prevent/treat graft-versus-host disease. Common side effects include decreased kidney function, tremors, headache, high blood pressure, low magnesium, high blood sugar, nausea, diarrhea, insomnia and increased risk of infections. Drug level is monitored for effect and toxicity.

Tobramycin

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain bacterial infections. Common side effects include decreased kidney function, ringing in ears, hearing loss and dizziness.

Trandate (see Labetalol)**Tylenol (see Acetaminophen)****Vancomycin**

An antibiotic used to treat or prevent certain infections. Also used to treat infectious diarrhea. Common side effects include pain at peripheral IV site or "red man syndrome" (redness or rash over the face, neck and upper chest), low blood pressure and decreased kidney function.

Vasotec (see Enalapril)**Vicodin (see Hydrocodone with acetaminophen)****Zofran (see Ondansetron)****Zovirax (see Acyclovir)**