

## Patient Treatment Information

# Dacarbazine

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Your chemotherapy treatment is called dacarbazine (da-CARB-ah-zine) or DTIC-Dome®. It is commonly used to treat melanoma and has also been used to treat other diseases. Dacarbazine prevents cancer cells from dividing and growing, and can eventually cause the cancer cells to shrink and die.

### What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Treatment?

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any prescription or over-the-counter products you are taking, including dietary supplements, vitamins, herbal medicines and homeopathic remedies.

Use an effective birth control method while you are being treated. Chemotherapy drugs can cause harm to a fetus, so be sure to tell your healthcare provider right away if you or your partner become pregnant.

Avoid breastfeeding during treatment. It is not known if dacarbazine passes into breast milk.

Some chemotherapy drugs can cause sterility. Talk with your healthcare provider about your options if you want to have children in the future.

Do not get any immunizations or vaccinations while you are being treated without the approval of your healthcare provider.

### What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Dacarbazine?

Dacarbazine can cause irritation if it accidentally leaks out of the vein. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have redness, pain, burning or swelling around the injection site during your treatment.

Dacarbazine can cause flu-like symptoms that may last for several days, such as fever, chills, weakness, muscle aches, headache and stuffy nose. Tell your healthcare provider if you notice these symptoms.

Dacarbazine can cause tingling and burning at the area of injection while you are receiving the drug. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you feel any pain. Slowing down the infusion can help lessen the pain.

In rare cases, dacarbazine can cause severe liver damage. This is more common when dacarbazine is given with other chemotherapy drugs, but can happen when dacarbazine is given alone. Tell your healthcare provider if you have a history of liver disease.

In rare cases, dacarbazine can cause a severe allergic reaction. This side effect usually occurs with the first dose but can also happen later in the course of treatment. Tell your healthcare provider if you notice a skin rash, itching, chills, redness of the face, dizziness, headache or shortness of breath.

In rare cases, patients treated with dacarbazine may develop leukemia several years after treatment. This side effect is more common in those who have been heavily pretreated with chemotherapy or given high doses of certain chemotherapy drugs..

Your treatment can interact with other substances, including:

- Phenytoin (Dilantin®)
- Phenobarbital
- Allopurinol
- Azathioprine
- Mercaptopurine
- Interleukin-2

Please note this list is a summary and does not contain all possible drug interactions.

Contact your healthcare provider if you are taking any medications that can interact with your treatment.

**You should not take this treatment** if you are allergic to dacarbazine or any of its components.

## How Is the Treatment Given?

Your healthcare provider will give you your treatment by injection into a vein. The dose you receive will be based on your weight and height. Your healthcare provider will determine the number of treatments you receive.

You may be given medicine before or after your treatment to help prevent and control nausea and vomiting. These medicines may be given either by mouth or by injection into a vein.

If you are given any medicine to take at home, do not share it with others. Sharing this medication with anyone else could be harmful.

## When Should I Call My Healthcare Provider?

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Shaking chills or fever of 100.5 degrees F or higher
- Unusual bleeding, easy bruising or pinpoint red spots on your skin
- Vomiting that is severe or lasts several hours
- Painful or frequent urination or blood in your urine
- Diarrhea that causes an additional four bowel movements a day, diarrhea that lasts more than one day, diarrhea at night or diarrhea with fever, cramps or bloody stools
- Irregular or rapid heart beat, chest pain, chest tightness or shortness of breath
- Dizziness or feeling lightheaded
- Inability to eat or weight loss

## What Are the Possible Side Effects?

All drugs can cause side effects, but every person reacts differently to each drug. The following chart lists the possible side effects that can occur with your treatment, how to recognize and minimize symptoms and possible treatments. The side effects are grouped by how often the side effect occurs: Common (occurred in more than 25 percent of patients), Less Common (occurred in 5 to 25 percent of patients) or Rare (occurred in less than 5 percent of patients).

Side Effect	How to Minimize Side Effect	Possible Treatments
<b>Risk of Infection (Common)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever and chills</li> <li>• Painful urination</li> <li>• Sore throat and cough</li> <li>• Nasal congestion</li> <li>• Swelling or redness of the skin at the site of a wound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands often.</li> <li>• Brush and floss your teeth daily.</li> <li>• Clean cuts right away with warm water, soap and antiseptic.</li> <li>• When your white blood cell count is low, stay away from crowds and people with colds or other illnesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your white blood cell count.</li> <li>• You may be given an antibiotic to treat or prevent infection.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.</li> </ul>
<b>Bleeding (Common)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual bleeding or easy bruising</li> <li>• Black or tar-like stools</li> <li>• Blood in your urine</li> <li>• Pinpoint red spots on your skin</li> <li>• Bleeding gums or nosebleeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid aspirin and aspirin-like drugs, such as ibuprofen.</li> <li>• Use caution with sharp objects, such as razors and nail cutters.</li> <li>• Avoid activities that can cause cuts, bumps and bruises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your platelet count.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.</li> </ul>
<b>Nausea/Vomiting (Common. Symptoms are generally mild to moderate.)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling queasy or sick to your stomach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast.</li> <li>• Eat food cold or at room temperature so the smell of food will not bother you.</li> <li>• Avoid fried, spicy or fatty foods.</li> <li>• Eat and drink slowly.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids during the day, but to avoid bloating, drink small amounts of liquid during meals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will be given medicine to help reduce nausea and vomiting.</li> </ul>

Side Effect	How to Minimize Side Effect	Possible Treatments
<b>Anorexia or Appetite Loss (Common)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not having an appetite</li> <li>• Feeling too nauseated to eat</li> <li>• Metallic or medicinal taste</li> <li>• Change in taste causing dislike for certain foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try eating six to eight small meals or snacks each day instead of three larger meals.</li> <li>• Vary your diet and try new foods and recipes.</li> <li>• Take a walk before meals, when possible. This may make you feel hungrier.</li> <li>• Eat with friends or family. When eating alone, listen to the radio or watch TV.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook dinners ahead of time and freeze them in small portions so that cooking smells are minimized.</li> <li>• Let others help with food, but ask that foods be prepared in small portions that can be frozen. And don't hesitate to let them know which foods to avoid.</li> <li>• Add mild spices to change flavor.</li> <li>• It might be helpful to have a program, such as Meals on Wheels, deliver food to you.</li> </ul>
<b>Anemia (Less Common)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue or weakness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Pale skin</li> <li>• Feeling out of breath</li> <li>• Feeling cold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan rest periods throughout the day.</li> <li>• Organize daily activities so that you conserve your energy.</li> <li>• Try to eat a well balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Stand up slowly to avoid getting dizzy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your red blood cell count.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.</li> </ul>
<b>Alopecia or Hair Loss (Less Common)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than normal amount of hair loss in your brush, in the shower or on your pillow after sleeping</li> <li>• Loss of body hair</li> </ul>	<p>Alopecia cannot be prevented but here are tips to help with hair loss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a soft hairbrush. Do not use brush rollers, color treat your hair or get a permanent.</li> <li>• Avoid daily hair washing, use a mild shampoo and avoid using a hairdryer, or use a low setting if you must use one.</li> <li>• Have your hair cut short; this will make it look fuller.</li> <li>• Your insurance might cover a wig. Ask your healthcare provider for a prescription for a "hair prosthesis". Your hair color and style can be better matched if you shop for a wig before losing a lot of hair.</li> <li>• Use sunscreen or wear a hat or scarf to protect your scalp from the sun.</li> </ul>	
<b>Diarrhea (Rare)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose or watery stools several times a day</li> <li>• Abdominal cramping, gas and bloating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast.</li> <li>• Avoid caffeine; alcohol; raw fruits and vegetables; raw eggs; undercooked meats; spicy, fatty and greasy foods; milk and dairy products; foods that cause gas, such as beans and other legumes; high fiber and high-fat foods; foods left unrefrigerated for more than two hours (one hour for egg dishes and cream or mayonnaise-based foods); bulk laxatives; and stool softeners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink eight to ten glasses of clear liquids every day.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine to help treat diarrhea.</li> </ul>

## What Are the Other Possible Side Effects?

The following chart lists additional side effects found with the individual drugs in this treatment. It does not list all possible side effects. For more information, talk with your healthcare provider.

Common Side Effects	Less Common Side Effects	Rare Side Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redness, pain or swelling at the injection site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abnormal sensations on the face, such as numbness, pricking, tingling, burning or flushing</li> <li>• Increased sensitivity to the sun</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow eyes or skin</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> </ul>

## Notes

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