Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

BCG (Intravesical

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Tice BCG

Brand Names: Canada

Oncotice; Verity-BCG

Warning

- The BCG in this drug is a type of bacteria. This drug is given into the bladder. The BCG may stay in your urinary tract for some time after the drug is given. Sometimes, infections have happened after the use of this drug. Rarely, these have been deadly. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent certain types of bladder cancer.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have any of these health problems: Blood in the urine, TB

(tuberculosis), urinary tract infection (UTI), any infection, an illness with a fever, a weak immune system, or a disease that may cause a weak immune system like HIV.

- If you have or have ever had a BCG reaction.
- If you are getting other treatments like radiotherapy or chemo.
- If you are taking antibiotics, talk with doctor.
- If you are taking any drugs that suppress your immune system. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If you have had any of these in the past 14 days: A biopsy, a procedure called transurethral resection (TUR), or damage to the urinary tract after a catheter has been placed.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If you have a latex allergy, talk with your doctor.
- Take extra care with your urine for the first 6 hours after getting this drug. Use the same toilet each time you use the bathroom at home. Sit down to urinate so your urine does not splash or spray.
- Before flushing, add an equal amount of bleach to the urine. Wait 15 minutes, then flush. Do this for the first 6 hours after BCG is given.
- It is fine to be around close contacts like household members, friends, and

caregivers. However, do not allow anyone to come into contact with your urine.

- You may need a TB (tuberculosis) test before starting this drug.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Be sure your doctor and lab workers know you use this drug.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Worse pain or burning when passing urine or if these effects will not go away.
- Not able to pass urine or change in how much urine is passed.
- Blood in the urine.
- Fever with flu-like signs that last more than 72 hours.
- High fever over 103°F (39.4°C).

- Mild fever over 101.3 degrees F or 38.5 degrees C for more than 48 hours.
- Joint pain.
- Cough.
- Swelling of the testicles.
- Testicle pain.
- Feeling very tired or weak.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Upset stomach.
- Many people using this drug have bladder irritation. Most of the time, bladder irritation starts within 4 to 6 hours after getting this drug and may last for 24 to 72 hours. You may pass urine more often or feel the need to pass urine right away. Call your doctor if you have bladder irritation that bothers you or does not go away within 72 hours.
- It is common to have burning or pain when passing urine, chills, flu-like signs, mild fever, tiredness, or weakness. If any of these signs last more than 2 days or get worse, call your doctor.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given through a catheter into the bladder.
- You will need to try to keep this drug in your bladder for up to 2 hours, but no longer than 2 hours. This drug will come out when you pass urine.
- Drink plenty of liquids that do not have caffeine for several hours after getting this drug unless told to drink less liquids by your doctor. This helps to get rid of the drug from your bladder.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

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- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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