PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Etoposide Phosphate

This information from Lexicomp® 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

Etopophos

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat testicular cancer.
- It is used to treat lung cancer.

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

- If you have an allergy to etoposide, etoposide phosphate, or any other part of 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 are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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.
- Long-term use may raise the chance of getting other cancers. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with

infections, colds, or flu.

- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- If you have upset stomach, throwing up, diarrhea, or decreased appetite, talk with your doctor. There may be ways to lower these side effects.
- If you have had or will be having radiation treatment, talk with your doctor. Worse side effects from radiation treatment have happened with this drug.
- This drug may affect fertility. Fertility problems may lead to not being able to get pregnant or father a child. This may go back to normal but sometimes it may not. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- People treated with this drug may go through menopause at a younger age than normal. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant.
- If you or your sex partner may become pregnant, you must use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Ask your doctor how long to use birth control. If you or your sex partner gets pregnant, call your doctor right away.

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 lung or breathing problems like shortness of breath or other trouble breathing, cough, or fever.
- 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.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Change in eyesight.

- Loss of eyesight.
- Seizures.
- Change in color of skin.
- This drug may lower the ability of your bone marrow to make blood cells that your body needs. This can lead to very bad and sometimes deadly bleeding problems or infections. Tell your doctor right away if you have signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, a wound that will not heal; any bruising or bleeding; or if you feel very tired or weak.
- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- This drug may cause tissue damage if the drug leaks from the vein. Tell your nurse if you have any redness, burning, pain, swelling, blisters, skin sores, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your body.

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 or throwing up.
- Constipation.
- Stomach pain.
- Change in taste.

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 as an infusion into a vein over a period of

time.

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.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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