



# NYUCancerInstitute

## P A T I E N T I N F O R M A T I O N

The side effects listed below are those that occur most frequently. Other side effects may occur; please contact your doctor or oncology nurse to report any medical problems.

Dose \_\_\_\_\_

### RITUXIMAB (Rituxan®)

#### **Early Side Effects**

- a. Infusion-related reactions may occur. Fever and chills are the most common symptoms. Other infusion-related reactions include nausea/vomiting, weakness, headache, itching, runny nose, drop in blood pressure, shortness of breath, sensation of tongue or throat swelling, flushing, pain at disease sites, and fatigue. This reaction may occur at the beginning of the first infusion within 30 minutes to 2 hours.

Treatment usually can be continued by slowing down the rate of infusion, once the symptoms have completely resolved. The incidence of this reaction decreases with subsequent infusions. To prevent this reaction your doctor has prescribed medications to be given before Rituximab therapy is started and the rate of infusion is gradually escalated.

- b. Transient drop in blood pressure may occur during the infusion. It is important to let your doctor or nurse know if you are taking medications for high blood pressure.

#### **Late Side Effects**

- a. Drop in white blood cell and red blood cell counts. Your physician will be checking your blood counts on a regular basis.
- b. Abdominal pain, muscle aches, dizziness, rash, or throat irritation may occur. Inform your doctor or nurse if you experience these symptoms.