



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_____

LOW PLATELET COUNT

Treatment with some chemotherapy can cause your platelet count to be lower.

Platelets aid in blood clotting. Insufficient amounts of platelets can lead to bleeding and bruising. If you notice any unusual bleeding such as from your gums or nose, if you bruise easily or if you have red spots under your skin, call your doctor. Also call you doctor if you notice blood in your urine or stool.

If your platelets are low it is important to follow these guidelines in order to minimize problems:

Maintain good skin integrity by:

- a. Avoiding tight fitting clothes, or harsh fabrics.
- b. Use an electric razor instead of a blade when shaving.
- c. Use an emery board when filing nails.
- d. Avoid sports or other activities that may cause injury.
- e. Be extra careful when using a knife or tools.
- f. Be careful not to bum yourself especially when ironing or cooking.
- g. Wear gloves when doing any gardening.
- h. Maintain proper oral hygiene.
- i. Gently cleanse your mouth and gums with a soft bristle non-irritating brush or cotton swab. Rinse your mouth with mouthwash that has a low alcohol content. Avoid using dental floss.
- j. Lubricate lips with Vaseline jelly or cocoa butter, eat a soft, bland diet.
- k. Do not take any medications including aspirin or aspirin-free pain relievers without first checking with your doctor or nurse.
- l. Do not drink alcohol unless you get permission from your doctor.
- m. Use a water-based lubricant prior to sexual intercourse.
- n. Avoid forcefully blowing your nose; if blowing is necessary, blow gently through both nostrils simultaneously.
- o. If you experience a nose bleed sit up straight and apply pressure below the bridge of the nose. If bleeding does not subside in a few minutes, place ice on the bridge of the nose and at the nape of the neck; tilt head back and continue to apply pressure to nostrils. Call physician if bleeding persists longer than 10 minutes.