



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Daunorubicin**

**Drug type:** Daunorubicin is an anti-cancer/cytotoxic chemotherapy drug.

### **How this drug is given:**

- Daunorubicin is given by intravenous injection (IV).
- Daunorubicin is a vesicant. A vesicant is a chemical that causes extensive tissue damage and blistering if it escapes from the vein. If you notice redness or swelling at the IV site while you are receiving daunorubicin, alert your nurse immediately.

### **Side effects:**

Important things to remember about the side effects of daunorubicin:

- Most people do not experience all of the side effects listed.
- Side effects are almost always reversible and will usually go away after treatment is complete.
- There are many options to help minimize or prevent side effects.

### **The following side effects are common for patients receiving daunorubicin:**

- Pain along the site where the medication was given
- Urine may appear red, red-brown, orange or pink from the color of the medication for one to two days after you receive a dose
- Low blood counts; white and red blood cells and platelets may temporarily decrease
- Nausea or vomiting (usually mild, occurs within 1-2 hours of treatment)
- Mouth sores (in the first week after treatment)
- Hair loss on the scalp or elsewhere on the body; most patients do lose some or all of their hair during their treatment, but your hair will grow back after treatment is completed
- Heart rhythm abnormalities, generally without symptoms and short lived

### **These are less common side effects for patients receiving daunorubicin:**

- Diarrhea (within the first week of therapy)
- Problems with fertility - ability to bear children (occurs in about 10% of both men and women (this should be discussed with your doctor prior to therapy)
- Darkening of skin at the site of previous radiation therapy
- Darkening, discoloration of nail beds

A serious but uncommon side effect of daunorubicin can be interference with the pumping action of the heart.

## **When to contact your doctor or health care provider:**

Contact your health care provider ***immediately***, day or night, if you should experience any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 101° F or higher, chills (possible signs of infection)
- Blistering at the IV site
- Shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, closing up of the throat, swelling of facial features, hives (possible allergic reaction)

The following symptoms require medical attention, but are not an emergency. Contact your health care provider ***within 24 hours*** of noticing any of the following:

- Mouth sores (painful redness, swelling or ulcers)
- Nausea (interferes with ability to eat and unrelieved with prescribed medication)
- Vomiting (vomiting more than 4-5 times in a 24 hour period)
- Diarrhea (4-6 episodes in a 24-hour period)
- Fast or irregular heart beat
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Black or tarry stool or blood in your stools or urine.
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Swelling of the feet or ankles
- Yellowing of the eyes or skin

**Always inform your health care provider if you experience any unusual symptoms.**