



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Fludara ®**

**Generic name:** Fludarabine

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

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

- Fludarabine is given through an infusion into a vein (intravenous, IV).

### **Side effects:**

Important things to remember about the side effects of fludarabine:

- 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 fludarabine:**

- Low blood counts. Your white and red blood cells and platelets may temporarily decrease. This can put you at increased risk for infection, anemia and/or bleeding.
- Fever
- Infection
- Weakness
- Cough
- Nausea and vomiting
- Poor appetite

### **These side effects are less common side effects of patients receiving fludarabine:**

- Chills
- Fatigue
- Pain
- Sweating
- Numbness and tingling of hands and feet
- Shortness of breath
- Diarrhea
- Rash
- Swelling
- Taste changes, metallic taste

**Other side effects:**

- Increased risk of infection (such as herpes, fungal infection, and lung infections) due to suppression of the immune system. Antibiotics are often given to prevent or protect from these infections while receiving fludarabine.

**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)
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Unable to urinate

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:

- 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)
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Black or tarry stools, or blood in your stools
- Blood in the urine
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Signs of infection such as redness or swelling, pain on swallowing, coughing up mucous, or painful urination

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