



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Gemzar ®**

**Generic name:** Gemcitabine

### **Drug type:**

Gemzar is an anti-cancer/cytotoxic chemotherapy drug.

### **How Gemzar is given:**

- Gemzar is given by infusion through a vein (intravenously, by IV)

### **Gemzar side effects:**

Important things to remember about Gemzar side effects:

- 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 Gemzar:**

- Flu-like symptoms (muscle pain, fever, headache, chills, fatigue)
- Fever (within 6-12 hours of first dose)
- Fatigue
- Nausea (mild)
- Vomiting
- Poor appetite
- Skin rash
- Low blood counts; white and red blood cells and platelets may temporarily decrease.
- Temporary increases in liver function tests
- Blood or protein in the urine

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

- Diarrhea
- Weakness
- Hair loss
- Mouth sores
- Difficulty sleeping
- Shortness of breath

## **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)

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

- Nausea that interferes with eating and is not relieved by medications prescribed by your doctor
- Vomiting (more than 4-5 episodes within a 24-hour period)
- Extreme fatigue (inability to perform self-care activities)
- Diarrhea (more than 4-6 episodes in a 24-hour period)
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Black or tarry stools, or blood in your stools or urine

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