



# NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

*the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West*

## **Novantrone ®**

**Generic name:** Mitoxantrone

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

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

- Mitoxantrone is given through an infusion into a vein (intravenous, IV).
- Mitoxantrone may be an irritant. An irritant is a chemical that can cause inflammation of the vein through which it is given. If the medication escapes from the vein it can cause tissue damage. If you experience pain or notice redness or swelling at the IV site while you are receiving mitoxantrone, alert your nurse immediately.

### **Side effects:**

Important things to remember about the side effects of mitoxantrone:

- 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 mitoxantrone:**

- Low blood counts; white and red blood cells and platelets may temporarily decrease.
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever
- Increases in blood tests measuring liver function- these return to normal once treatment is discontinued

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

- Weakness
- Mouth sores
- Hair loss
- Diarrhea
- Abnormal heart beat, abnormal EKG
- Low blood pressure
- Blue/green discoloration of whites of eyes and/or urine for 1-2 days after treatment

### **Delayed effects:**

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

There is a slight risk of developing a blood cancer such as leukemia years after taking mitoxantrone. Talk to your doctor about this risk.

**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 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 or urine
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Mouth sores (painful redness, swelling or ulcers)
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling of the feet or ankles/sudden weight gain.
- 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.**