



NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West

Ontak®

Generic name: Denileukin Diftitox

Drug type: Ontak is a targeted therapy. It is classified as a biologic response modifier.

How this drug is given:

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

Side effects of Ontak:

- 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 Ontak:

- Hypersensitivity reaction during the infusion with symptoms such as low blood pressure, back pain, shortness of breath
- Fever/Chills (usually occurs during or soon after the infusion)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Elevated
- Weakness
- Swelling (usually of hands and feet)
- Infection
- Pain
- Low blood pressure
- Poor appetite
- Rash

These are less common side effects of patients receiving Ontak:

- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Cough
- Dizziness
- Itching
- Inflammation of the throat or nose
- Low Red blood cell count. Your red blood cells may temporarily decrease. This can put you at increased risk for anemia
- Numbness and tingling of hands and feet

- Blood test abnormalities (low calcium level, low albumin level)
- Muscle pain
- Weight loss
- Rapid heart rate
- Anxiety or nervousness
- Sweating
- Blood in the urine
- Cloudy urine

A **serious** side effect of Ontak is "capillary leak syndrome" or "vascular leak syndrome." Capillary leak syndrome is a potentially serious disease in which fluids within the vascular system (veins and capillaries) leaks into the tissue outside the bloodstream. This results in low blood pressure and poor blood flow to the internal organs.

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:

- Dizziness (especially when changing position), sudden swelling or rapid weight gain, little or no urine output (for 8-12 hours), shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, irregular heartbeat, or chest pain.

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:

- Fever of 101° F or higher, chills occurring 1-2 days after infusion or later (possible signs of infection)
- 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
- Blood in the urine
- Cloudy urine
- Pain or burning with urination
- Extreme fatigue or weakness (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Anxiety or nervousness that interferes with your ability to function
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes

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