

Trifluridine and tipiracil (Lonsurf®)

Chemotherapy is the most commonly prescribed anti-cancer treatment but other types of treatment are also used. The aim of this chemotherapy is to try and control your cancer and its symptoms. Your clinician will be happy to answer any questions you have about your treatment. You will find it useful to refer to the booklet 'Chemotherapy, a guide' which gives general information on chemotherapy and side effects.

Your treatment

Your clinician has prescribed a treatment which includes the chemotherapy tablets trifluridine and tipiracil (also known as Lonsurf®).

Trifluridine and tipiracil (Lonsurf®) tablets come in 2 strengths:

15mg and 20mg. Therefore you may have 2 separate boxes; one for each strength. Your height and weight will help us calculate the dose you need to take.

1. Take the tablets twice a day [morning and evening]
2. Each treatment cycle will be 28 days in duration. One treatment cycle consists of the following:
 - Days 1 to 5:** take the tablets starting on the morning of day 1 through to the evening of day 5.
 - Days 6 and 7:** will be rest days so do not take any tablets.
 - Days 8 to 12:** take the tablets starting on the morning of day 8 through to the evening of day 12.
 - Days 13 to 28:** will be rest days so do not take any tablets.
3. Take the tablets within 1 hour of completing a meal (morning and evening meal). It doesn't have to be a large meal, it can be a small meal such as a snack or sandwich.
4. Take the tablets with a glass of water.
5. If you miss a dose do not double up the next dose. The tablets should only be taken on days 1 to 5 and days 8 to 12 of each cycle.
6. General information: return any unused medication to pharmacy or clinic for disposal; store in the original container at room temperature; keep all medicines out of reach of children and pets.

You will have a routine blood test before the start of each cycle of treatment.

This treatment can have serious or possibly life-threatening side effects. It is very important that you report side effects straight away. Don't delay, if you feel unwell, please ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658**. The lines are open 24 hours a day.



Increased risk of serious infection

You are vulnerable to infection while you are having chemotherapy. Minor infections can become life-threatening in a matter of hours if left untreated. Symptoms of infection include fever, shivering, sweats, sore throat, diarrhoea, discomfort when you pass urine, cough or breathlessness. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer so you can check your temperature. You can buy one from your local chemist.

If you feel unwell, you have symptoms of infection or your temperature is above 37.5°C or below 36°C contact The Christie Hotline straight away.

Sometimes the medication itself or the disease can cause fever even in the absence of any infection.

Herbal medication

Some herbal medicine including St John's Wort can affect the chemotherapy. You should let your clinician or pharmacist know if you are taking any herbal medication, complementary or alternative medicines, including vitamins, minerals and medicines purchased over-the-counter.

Flu vaccinations

It's safe to have a flu jab but depending on the sort of chemotherapy you have had, it may not give quite as much protection against infection as usual. Some patients may need two vaccinations. However, if you're thinking of having any other vaccinations, do check with your Christie doctor first, because some vaccines should be avoided.

COVID-19 vaccinations

We advise that all patients receive a COVID-19 vaccination when this is offered. Your doctor will discuss with you the best time to have this.

Possible side effects

Chemotherapy can cause many different side effects. Some are more likely to occur than others. Everyone is different and not everyone gets all the side effects. Most side effects are usually temporary, but in some rare cases they can be life-threatening. It is important to tell your hospital doctor or nurse about any side effects so they can be monitored and, where possible, treated. Depending upon type and degree of side effects your doctor might wish to reduce the dose of your treatment or in some cases stop it altogether.

Common side effects (more than 1 in 10)

• Anaemia (low number of red blood cells)

While having this treatment you may become anaemic. This may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. You may need a blood transfusion.

• Bruising or bleeding

This treatment can reduce the production of platelets which help the blood clot. Let your doctor know if you have any unexplained bruising or bleeding, such as nosebleeds, bloodspots or rashes on the skin, and bleeding gums. You may need a platelet transfusion.

• Nausea and vomiting (sickness)

A common side effect of your treatment is sickness. If you are sick (vomiting) please tell your doctor or nurse at the Christie. They will be able to give you advice about controlling these symptoms. It is important to try and eat regular healthy meals to maintain your energy.

We will prescribe anti-sickness medication for you when you begin treatment, if you do feel sick at home

follow the instructions on the bottle/ packet for taking these. You can contact The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** if you need further advice to know how best to control symptoms.

- **Diarrhoea**

Diarrhoea is a fairly common side effect of your treatment. If you have watery diarrhoea you should immediately take the anti-diarrhoea treatment that the doctor has prescribed for you. This is the loperamide dispensed by The Christie pharmacy. Follow the doctor's instructions **EXACTLY**:

Take 2 loperamide capsules as soon as the first liquid stool occurs. Then take one capsule with each liquid loose stool (the maximum loperamide in a day is 8 capsules). If you have a stoma or notice capsules in your stoma output you should ask for tablets rather than capsules.

If you continue to have more than 4 bowel movements a day, or bowel movements at night please ring The Christie Hotline for advice. Note that diarrhoea may or may not be associated with abdominal pain.

- **Sore mouth or altered taste**

Your mouth may become sore or dry, or you may notice small mouth ulcers during this treatment. Drinking plenty of fluids and cleaning your teeth regularly and gently with a soft toothbrush can help to reduce the risk of this happening. We can prescribe a mouthwash for you to use during treatment. You can dilute this with water if your mouth is sore. A sore mouth, altered taste and sickness can result in a reduced appetite. Ask your clinician for further advice. There is also general mouth care information in the chemotherapy booklet. If you continue to have a sore mouth, please contact The Christie Hotline.

- **Lethargy**

Some chemotherapy may make you feel tired and lacking in energy. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. If you do feel tired, take rest and get help with household chores. If necessary, take time off work. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial.

- **Hair thinning**

Hair loss is very unusual with this treatment. In rare cases some hair loss may occur during treatment. It is advisable to avoid perms, colours, use of hot brushes and vigorous, frequent washing that could increase hair loss. Please remember that this is a temporary side effect and your hair will grow back when your treatment is completed. Very rarely, hair loss can be permanent.

The cancer information centre offers practical and emotional support about hair loss for men and women. They will also advise about headwear and access to the wig service. Drop in, contact **0161 446 8100/8107** or email the-christie.informationcentre@nhs.net.

Uncommon side effects (less than 1 in 10)

- **Watery eyes**

Your eyes may also water. Often this will improve in time and needs no specific treatment. But if you have ongoing symptoms please discuss this with your clinician.

Serious and potentially life threatening side effects

In a small proportion of patients chemotherapy can result in very severe side effects which may be life-threatening in some cases. The team caring for you will discuss the risk of these side effects with you.

• Chest pain or heart attack (Warning!)

A small number of patients receiving Trifluridine and tipiracil (Lonsurf®) can experience chest pain (angina) or rarely, have a heart attack. Extremely rarely, this may lead to death. Other complications such as blood clot (lung), stroke or mini-stroke can happen but are exceptionally rare. If you develop any of these symptoms you should ring **999** and go immediately to your nearest Accident and Emergency department. You may have an electrocardiograph (ECG) to check your heart before you start your chemotherapy.

Do not take any further Trifluridine and tipiracil (Lonsurf®) tablets until agreed by the team at The Christie.

• Blood clots (Warning!)

People with cancer are at a higher risk of developing blood clots. The medical name for this is a thromboembolism or a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). The most common place to develop a clot is in the leg.

You must contact The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Pain, redness and swelling of your arm or leg(s). The area may feel warm to touch.
- Breathlessness, pain in your chest or upper back, light headedness, coughing up blood.

For any chest pain, please call **999** immediately.

You can help to prevent a clot by taking regular short walks to keep the blood moving, do simple exercises such as bending and straightening your toes every hour if you are unable to move around much and drink plenty of fluids. Most clots can be treated successfully using drugs to help thin the blood (anticoagulants).

Increased risk of serious infection

As discussed earlier, chemotherapy results in an increased risk of severe infections which can be life threatening.

Sex, contraception and fertility

Protecting your partner and contraception: We recommend that you or your partner use a condom during sexual intercourse while you are having the course of chemotherapy. Chemotherapy is dangerous to unborn babies and this will also protect you and your partner from any chemotherapy drugs that may be present in semen and in the vagina. If you suspect that you may be pregnant please tell your doctor immediately.

Fertility: This chemotherapy may affect your ability to have children. Your doctor or nurse should have discussed this with you. If not, please ask them before you start treatment. This chemotherapy may affect your ability to have children. Your doctor or nurse should have discussed this with you. If not, please ask them before you start treatment.

Late side effects

Some side effects may become evident only after a number of years. In reaching any decision with you about treatment, the potential benefit you receive from treatment will be weighed against the risks of serious long term side effects to the heart, lungs, kidneys and bone marrow. With some drugs there is also a small but definite risk of developing another cancer. If any of these problems specifically applies to you, the doctor will discuss these with you and note this on your consent form.

Contacts

If you have any general questions or concerns about your treatment, please ring the area where you are having treatment:

Administration enquiries - **0161 918 7606/7610**

Chemotherapy nurse - **0161 918 7171**

Pharmacy - **0161 446 3432/3433**

For advice ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours)

Your consultant is:

Your hospital number is:

Your key worker is:

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If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.



Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week