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Bleomycin: Patient drug information

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(For additional information [see "Bleomycin: Drug information"](#) and [see "Bleomycin: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: Canada Blenoxane; Bleomycin Injection, USP

Warning

- Very bad lung problems have happened with this drug. Rarely, this has been deadly. The risk of lung problems may be higher in people with kidney problems, the elderly, and in people getting more than a total dose of 400 units. Lung problems have also happened in younger people and in people getting low doses. Call your doctor right away if you have shortness of breath or other breathing problems.
- A very bad reaction has happened in people with lymphoma treated with this drug. These reactions may happen during or within several hours of your dose. Most of the time, these reactions have happened after the first or second dose. Call your doctor if you have very bad dizziness, passing out, confusion, fever, chills, or wheezing. Talk with your doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat cancer.
- It is used to stop fluid buildup in the lung cavity.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to bleomycin or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- To help with mouth sores, use a soft toothbrush or cotton swabs and rinse the mouth. Do not use mouth rinses that have alcohol in them.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Have your lung function checked as you have been told by your doctor. Talk with your doctor.
- If you are 70 years or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Cough that does not go away.
- Very bad mouth irritation.
- Very bad skin irritation.
- Very bad irritation where this drug is used.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Change in skin or finger nails.
- Change in color of skin.
- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- Weight loss.
- Not hungry.
- Hair loss.
- Feeling tired or weak.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as a shot.
- It is given into the lung cavity.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist about how to throw out unused drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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