

PCV: Procarbazine, CCNU and Vincristine

What is PCV?

This is the short name for the medicines used in this chemotherapy treatment. The 3 medicines you will receive during this treatment are Procarbazine (Matulane or “P”), CCNU (Lomustine or “C”) and Vincristine (“V”).

What is Procarbazine and how does it work?

Procarbazine is a chemotherapy medicine known as an “alkylating agent.” This medicine is made in a laboratory and works to stop fast growing cancer cells from dividing and making new cells.

What is CCNU and how does it work?

CCNU is a chemotherapy medicine known as an “alkylating agent.” This medicine is made in a laboratory and works to stop fast growing cancer cells from dividing and making new cells.

What is Vincristine and how does it work?

Vincristine is a chemotherapy medicine known as a “plant alkaloid.” This medicine is made from plants and works to stop fast growing cancer cells from dividing and making new cells.

Why am I getting 3 treatment medicines for my cancer?

These medicines work to stop fast growing cancer cells from dividing and making new cells, but they attack the cancer cells differently. Giving the 3 medicines together makes your treatment more effective.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

What should I tell my doctor before I start treatment?

Talk to your doctor about the following:

- If you have ever had chemotherapy or anti-cancer treatment and the names of the medicines you were given.
- If you have ever had liver or kidney problems.
- If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant. Your doctor will talk with you about what birth control to use when you take these medicines.
- If you are breastfeeding.
- If you have been told that you need to start a new medicine.
- The medicines/pills you take, including:
 - ▶ Medicines ordered by any of your doctors
 - ▶ Herbs
 - ▶ Vitamins
 - ▶ Over-the-counter medicines

How does my doctor decide my treatment dose?

To determine your treatment dose, your doctor will review your height, your weight, the medicines you take, how well your liver and kidneys work and any other health problems you have. You will continue this treatment as long as it works well and your cancer is not getting worse.

How will my treatment be given?

PCV treatment is a 56 day cycle. You will be given a new medicine calendar at the beginning of every cycle. It is important to use this calendar to keep track of when to take each medicine. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will talk with you about the precautions you need to follow when you take these medicines.

Procarbazine is a capsule that you will take on days 8 to 21 of your treatment cycle. Swallow the capsule whole with a full glass of water at bedtime.

CCNU is a capsule that you will take on day 1 of your treatment cycle. Swallow the capsule whole with a full glass of water at bedtime, unless told otherwise by a member of your health care team.

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Vincristine is given on days 8 and 29 of your treatment cycle. This medicine is given directly into your blood stream through a tube (IV) placed in your arm or chest. Your nurse will stay with you while these drugs are given. This treatment will take about 20 to 30 minutes.

Tell your nurse right away if you feel any pain, stinging or burning while getting this medicine. Your entire visit, including your doctor's appointment and your treatment will take about 2 to 3 hours.

Day 1 Start Cycle CCNU	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Day 8 Vincristine IV Procarbazine	Day 9 Procarbazine	Day 10 Procarbazine	Day 11 Procarbazine	Day 12 Procarbazine	Day 13 Procarbazine	Day 14 Procarbazine
Day 15 Procarbazine	Day 16 Procarbazine	Day 17 Procarbazine	Day 18 Procarbazine	Day 19 Procarbazine	Day 20 Procarbazine	Day 21 Procarbazine
Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	Day 28
Day 29 Vincristine IV	Day 30	Day 31	Day 32	Day 33	Day 34	Day 35
Day 36	Day 37	Day 38	Day 39	Day 40	Day 41	Day 42
Day 43	Day 44	Day 45	Day 46	Day 47	Day 48	Day 49
Day 50	Day 51	Day 52	Day 53	Day 54	Day 55	Day 56 End cycle

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What are the side effects of this treatment?

Every person responds differently to treatment. Some of the more common side effects of this chemotherapy are:

- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite or taste changes
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fatigue
- Lung changes, including shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- High blood pressure
- Mouth pain or open sores in your mouth
- Low white blood cell count (may increase your risk for infection)
- Low platelet count (may cause you to bleed more easily or longer than normal and have more bruising)
- Bone pain
- Numbness, tingling or burning sensation in your hands or feet

When should I call my doctor?

You should **call your doctor right away** if you have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher

A fever can be life-threatening if not treated. Your doctor may ask you to go to the hospital.

- Chills, sore throat, cough or a wound that does not get better
- Open sores in your mouth
- Nausea that makes you unable to eat or drink
- Vomiting (more than 4 times in a 24 hour period)
- Bleeding or bruising, including bloody or black stools or blood in your urine
- Diarrhea (4 or more loose stools in 24 hours)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Swelling or pain in your feet or ankles
- Fast weight gain
- Changes in urine, dark urine or no urine output for more than 12 hours

Is there anything else I should know about this treatment?

- To limit side effects, **do not** eat certain foods while you take **Procarbazine** and for 2 weeks after you stop the medicine. These foods include:
 - ▶ **Do not** drink alcohol (beer, wine or liquor) or caffeinated fluids, such as coffee and tea.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat strong, aged cheeses or fava beans.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat beef or chicken livers, caviar or smoked/aged meats, such as salami, pepperoni, sausage and bologna.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat raspberries, ripe bananas, figs, sauerkraut or dried fruits.
 - ▶ **Do not** eat soybeans or products made from soybeans, such as soy sauce and teriyaki sauce.
- Chemotherapy may make it harder for your body to fight infections. Wash your hands often and stay away from people who are sick.
- This treatment may require special precautions to prevent the chemotherapy drugs from coming into contact (through blood, urine, bowel movements, vomit and vaginal or seminal fluids) with others. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will talk with you about the precautions you need to follow when you take these medicines.
- Chemotherapy can change how your body reacts to vaccines. Talk to your doctor before you get any vaccines.
- Patients who get this treatment have a slightly higher risk of getting a rare form of blood cancer, called “leukemia”. Your doctor can tell you more about this risk.
- Drink 8 to 10 cups of non-caffeinated fluid each day to stay hydrated.
- This treatment may affect your ability to have children. **Talk to your doctor before you start this treatment if you plan to have children in the future.**

For more information about cancer, chemotherapy, side effects or how to care for yourself during treatment, refer to your **Chemotherapy and You** book, or ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Go to this video link: <http://cancer.osu.edu/patientedvideos> to learn more about your cancer diagnosis, treatment and care.