

# Oxaliplatin (Eloxatin™)

Oxaliplatin is an anti-cancer medicine that stops cell growth and division. This medicine is used to treat colon and rectal cancer. It is also used to treat other types of cancer.

## How Is It Given?

- clear liquid by intravenous (IV) line

## What Side Effects May Occur?

This is a partial list of the side effects you may have with this medicine. You may have some, all or none of those listed, or you may have other side effects not listed. Most side effects last only a short time.

### Common:

- nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up)
- diarrhea (loose, watery stools) or constipation (unable to have a bowel movement)
- decrease in white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets
- sensitivity to cold with numbness or tingling in the fingers, toes, and around the mouth or throat
- fatigue
- mouth sores
- stomach pain
- loss of appetite
- fever

### Less common:

- pain, redness or swelling at the injection site
- allergy symptoms of rash, itching, problems breathing, and lowered blood pressure
- problems swallowing
- hair loss

## Special Notes

- Numbness or tingling in the hands or feet (nerve problems) can happen within hours or 1 or 2 days after receiving oxaliplatin. This should go away within two weeks. Tell your doctor if these problems interfere with your everyday activities.
- To help lessen nerve problems, it is important to reduce the side effects caused by cold temperatures:
  - Wear warm clothing in cold weather.
  - Cover your mouth and nose to warm the air that goes into your lungs. Do not breathe deeply when exposed to cold air.
  - **Do not drink cold drinks or use ice cubes in your drinks.**
  - Do not use ice chips if you have nausea or mouth sores. Drink through a straw.
  - Wear gloves when touching cold objects (such as metals) in the winter or items in the refrigerator or freezer.

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- You may have changes in your menstrual cycle or sperm count. Discuss birth control measures with your doctor. You should not get pregnant or father a child while taking this medicine.
- Do not receive a vaccine that has a live virus, such as measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) or the oral polio vaccine. Some vaccines that are OK to have are tetanus, influenza and pneumococcal vaccines.

If you need a vaccine and aren't sure if it is OK, tell your doctor you are taking oxaliplatin.

## When To Call Your Doctor

You should call your doctor if you have:

- signs of nerve problems:
  - extra sensitive to cold temperatures or cold objects
  - problems breathing, swallowing or talking
  - jaw tightness or chest pressure
  - pain, tingling or burning in your hands, feet, or around your mouth or throat
  - problems walking or if you are unable to do everyday activities (such as writing, or buttoning your clothing)

- shortness of breath
- signs of an allergy
  - rash
  - itching
  - swelling of your lips or tongue
  - sudden cough
- fever, chills or sore throat
- frequent diarrhea
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- mouth sores
- nausea or vomiting you cannot control
- pain or redness at the IV site
- decreased urination or pain when you urinate.

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you want more complete medicine information or if you have questions.