

Pemetrexed (Alimta®)

What is Pemetrexed?

Pemetrexed is a medicine given to treat lung cancer and other cancers. It works by interfering with the dividing and growth of cancer cells.

How Is It Given?

- clear liquid by IV (intravenous)

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)
- vomiting (throwing up)
- loss of appetite
- shortness of breath
- lowered white blood cell counts (This puts you at an increased risk for infection.)
- anemia (lowered red blood cell counts)
- constipation
- chest pain
- fatigue (decreased energy, and weakness)

Less common:

- lowered platelet counts
- fever
- numbness or tingling in the hands and/or feet
- mouth sores
- depression
- rash or itching
- flu-like symptoms (muscle pain, headache, fatigue)
- change in kidney tests (You will need to have tests to make sure your kidneys are working well.)

Special Notes

- 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.
- Your ability to get pregnant (conceive or father a child) may be affected by this medicine. Talk with your doctor if you have questions or concerns.
- Most medicines may be taken with pemetrexed. However, check with your doctor before changing other medicines you are taking.
- Do not stop taking pemetrexed without first talking with your doctor.

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When To Call Your Doctor

You should call your doctor if you have:

- nausea (upset stomach) or vomiting (throwing up) unrelieved by medicine and/or lasting for longer than 24 hours
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- bloody or black tarry bowel movements
- blood in your urine
- pain when urinating
- severe fatigue that interferes with your ability to do self-care activities
- constipation
- fever, chills, sore throat or other signs of infection
- severe depression that interferes with your everyday activities.

Talk with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you have any questions about this medicine.