

Melphalan (Alkeran[®], L-PAM)

Melphalan is an anti-cancer medicine that stops cell growth and division. This medicine is used to treat many types of cancer.

How Is It Given?

- tablet by mouth
- 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:

- lowered white blood cell and platelet counts (occurs 1 to 3 weeks after treatment)
- nausea (feel like throwing up) and vomiting (throwing up)
- loss of appetite

Less common:

- hair thinning
- mouth sores
- swollen feet or legs
- diarrhea
- allergic reaction to the IV
- skin rash
- joint pain
- irregular menstrual cycle
- cough
- shortness of breath

Special Notes

- Take the melphalan tablet on an empty stomach (one to two hours after meals).
- Some medicines interact with melphalan. Let your doctor know if you are taking any of the following:
 - cyclosporin (Sandimmune[®], Neoral[®])
 - nalidixic acid (NegGram[®])
 - carmustine (BCNU[®]).
- 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.

When To Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you have:

- fever, chills or sore throat
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- skin rash or hives
- trouble breathing
- cough that will not stop
- yellowing of your skin or eyes
- blood in your stool or urine
- uncontrolled nausea or vomiting.

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