Alemtuzumab (ay lem TU zoo mab)
Patient Education

US Brand Names: Campath
Therapeutic Category: monoclonal antibody

What is this medicine used for?

- Alemtuzumab is used to treat cancer. More specifically this particular drug is used to treat B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

How does it work?

- Alemtuzumab is a Monoclonal antibody (MoAb). MoAbs react with certain markers on the surface of a cell in your body. This medicine is made to target a marker on T and B cells in our body. Alemtuzumab will target and kill malignant T and B cells.

What should my doctor or nurse know before I take this medication?

- If you are allergic to any medicines.
- If you are taking other over-the-counter or prescription medicines, including vitamins and herbal remedies.
- If you are, or may be pregnant.
- If you are breast feeding.

How is this drug given?

- This medicine can be used alone or in combination with other cancer medicine.
- This medicine is given into a vein or under the skin.
- Increased doses are given to reach the required dose in 3 to 7 days.
- Campath is usually given 3 times weekly.
- Each infusion is given over 2 hours.
- You will be given pre-medication to help prevent allergic reactions.

What are the general precautions when taking this medicine?
• Talk with your doctor or nurse before taking aspirin, aspirin-containing products, over-the-counter or prescription medications, including vitamins and herbal remedies.
• Drink 8 to 10 glasses of non-caffeinated liquid every day (unless told otherwise by your doctor or nurse).
• If you or your partner can get pregnant, use birth control during your treatment. Once completing treatment, discuss the timing for discontinuing birth control measures with your provider. (See Patient Teaching Sheet: Fertility)

**What are the common side effects of this medicine?**

• Infusion related reaction is most common with first treatment. Side effects with this reaction may include: fever, rigors/shaking, and blood pressure changes.
• Fatigue
• Skin rash
• Headache
• Muscle pain
• Myelosuppression (drop in number of blood cells)
  Most likely to cause a drop in the number of white blood cells in your body (Neutropenia). These cells fight infection. A drop in the number of these cells puts you at risk for infection. You may be at an increased risk for getting an infection during your treatment. Talk to your doctor or nurse about your risk. Avoid people with infections, colds or flu when you are at risk. (See Patient Teaching Sheet: Neutropenia)

**Danger signals to report immediately to your doctor or nurse:**

• Signs or symptoms of infection. This include a fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or greater, chills, severe sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, increased sputum or change in color, painful urination, mouth sores, wound that will not heal, or anal itching or pain.
• Severe nausea or vomiting or diarrhea not controlled by medication.
• Not able to eat or drink.
• Bleeding from your nose, mouth, gums, or in your urine or bowel movements. Bruising that does not heal.
• Feeling extremely tired, weak, dizzy or light headed.
• Go to your nearest emergency room for signs of a life-threatening reaction: wheezing, chest tightness, fever, itching, bad cough, blue skin color, seizures, or swelling of face, lips, tongue or throat.

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