You may not take ALL medications below. A prescription will be written for those you need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug name(s)</th>
<th>How much, when &amp; how</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prednisone</td>
<td>This medication may be used in combination with your chemotherapy.</td>
<td>Included in some chemotherapy treatment plans for certain types of lymphoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Best taken with food in the morning.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranitidine <em>(Zantac)</em></td>
<td>150 mg - 1 tablet orally take morning and evening</td>
<td>To prevent heartburn and stomach upset commonly associated with prednisone. If heartburn occurs while on this medication, inform your provider. You may need a different antacid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ondansetron <em>(Zofran)</em></td>
<td>8 mg -1 tablet orally every 8 hours for 3-4 days after your treatment.</td>
<td>To prevent nausea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prochlorperazine <em>(Compazine)</em></td>
<td>10 mg-1 tablet orally every 6-8 hours as needed for nausea.</td>
<td>To help with nausea if the Zofran is not effective. OK to take together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorazepam <em>(Ativan)</em></td>
<td>1mg-1 tablet orally every 4-6 hours as needed for nausea, anxiety or insomnia.</td>
<td>For nausea if the Zofran is not effective. Also helps with anxiety or insomnia on prednisone days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Docusate Sodium <em>(Colace)</em></td>
<td>250 mg-1 capsule orally 2-3 x day. You will need to increase or decrease depending on bowel movement.</td>
<td>To prevent the constipation commonly experienced with this treatment. If 2-3 Colace capsules do not work, you will need to take other over the counter laxatives. Milk of Magnisium (1tablespoon 2-3 times per day), Miralax, Senna or Dulcolax. Avoid fiber supplements and do not use suppositories or enemas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other drugs you may receive:
**Palonosetron (Aloxi)** - This is a long acting anti-nausea drug. If this is prescribed, you will NOT take the drug Zofran listed above.

**Metoclopramide (Reglan)** - This drug can help with nausea and get your GI tract working. If this is prescribed, you will not take the drug compazine listed above.

Other laxatives, sleep medications, or other antacids may be indicated during your treatment. Let your provider know how you are tolerating your medications, if you are having new symptoms or any other concerns. Be sure to provide us with a list of your current medications prior to starting chemotherapy treatment. Let us know if there are any changes in these medications during your treatment.

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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Whom do I call if I have a problem?**

Always call 650-498-6000.
For scheduling choose option 2
For clinical issues (i.e. fever) choose option 5.

This general number will get you to someone who can direct your call to the appropriate provider: Nurse Coordinator, triage nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Physician’s Assistant or Physician. If you have a **clinical concern always use the Cancer Center Triage line**. DO NOT email or call other phone numbers you may have for these providers.

**What number do I call (i.e. fever) after 5pm, on a holiday or weekends?**

The same number above, describe your problem and ask for the “On Call Oncologist”

**When should I call between appointments?**

- Fever of 100.4°F or more. Do not wait to call. Call as soon as you know you have a fever. Fever can indicate serious infection. Your white blood cell counts may be low which decreases you ability to fight infection. Do not take Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen) or other medications as they can mask a fever.
  
  *(If you receive the drug Bleomycin, you may get a fever up to 103°F within 48 hours of the treatment. Then, and only then, you can treat with Tylenol, fluids, and rest. Any fever outside of the 48 hour window is reason to call.)*

- Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea (watery or loose stool more than 3 to 4 times a day)
- Constipation (hard or no stool more than 1 to 2 days). Do Not use suppositories.
- New or uncontrolled pain
- Swelling in arms or legs
- Any sign of infection, with or without fever; persistent cough especially with sputum, red/warm/swollen skin, pain or burning with urination or diarrhea.
  
  *(If you receive the drug Adriamycin, (red chemotherapy), your urine will be bright orange/red color later that day or evening. Urine color should return to yellow with in 24 hours.)*

**What food can I eat while receiving chemotherapy?**
A regular balanced diet is best; no particular type of food is excluded and special diets, extreme changes in diet are not advised.

- **Cooked vs Raw?** Avoid raw meat, fish (sushi) and eggs. There is no evidence that you are more likely to get an infection by eating raw fruits and vegetables. It is best to wash all such foods thoroughly and avoid salad bars and buffets where many people may have touched the food.

- **Sweet?** Unless you are diabetic, moderate/normal amounts of sugar containing foods are fine. Moderate amount of sugar in diet has not been shown to result in a worse prognosis according to current evidence.

- **Spicy?** You may want to avoid spicy food as most lymphoma chemotherapy regimens include steroid drugs and these increase the risk for heartburn.

- **Alcohol?** Many patients do not feel like drinking during chemotherapy. There is no evidence that a glass of wine or beer will harm you. If you do drink, even occasionally, it is critical to let your provider know. You may be asked you to avoid alcohol completely or limit your intake depending on your particular disease, treatment or history.

- **Caffeine?** A moderate amount of caffeine (1-2 beverages/day) is ok. If you are taking prednisone, caffeine may enhance the stimulant effect and disrupt sleep.

- **Avoid abrasive or rough food that is if you find your mouth is sensitive.**

**Can I have sex?**

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, it is generally considered safe to enjoy sexual activity during the time you are on chemotherapy with only a few exceptions.

**Exceptions:**

Avoid sex when your blood counts are low.

Avoid sexual activity that can lead to tearing of rectal or vaginal tissue. If you have vaginal dryness use a lubricant.

*It is critical that you use birth control if you or your partner can get pregnant.*

If you are a premenopausal woman and your periods stop during chemotherapy, you still need to use birth control as ovulation can be unpredictable. Please talk to your providers if you have questions or concerns about this issue.

**Can I take supplements?**

Taking a multivitamin is ok. Any additional vitamins (megadoses of particular vitamins, anti-cold and flu formulas with high dose C, etc. herbal supplements, antioxidants or herbs in any form) are **NOT** advised during treatment. This includes Chinese or Ayurvedic remedies, anything from a health food store recommended for cancer or just regular herbs or vitamins you may take already. Many interact with chemotherapy in unpredictable ways. Use of supplements/herbs could decrease the efficacy of chemotherapy you are taking to fight your cancer. Please let us know if you take supplements and herbal remedies. Once your chemotherapy is complete, you can safely resume supplements use.

**Should I wear a mask, avoid children or crowds?**
Unless your provider instructs you otherwise, you do not need to do any of these things. It is wise to avoid close contact with people who are actively sick. The most important thing for you and your family to do is wash your hands. **Hand washing is the most important and most effective way to prevent infection.** Soap and water or alcohol-based rub are both effective if used correctly. It is important to rub hands together vigorously (for 15 seconds or more, covering all hand surfaces) during hand washing and that hands are dried completely.

**What else should I expect?**

Miscellaneous things that might occur with your chemotherapy that are not medically worrisome but often are upsetting include:

- Hair loss will depend on the chemotherapy you receive. Ask your provider if you will loose hair with your treatment.

- You may notice subtle darkening of birth marks, dark patches on tongue and darkening of nail beds. These changes and not serious and will fade after treatment.

- If you experience heavy, irregular, or miss menstrual cycles, notify your provider. Patients often have heavier or longer menstrual cycles at the beginning of treatment. This may be followed by no menstrual cycles for a period of time. The cessation of menstrual cycle during chemotherapy is not an absolute indication of future fertility problems.

**What side effects are most common while I am on treatment?**

Common side effects of chemotherapy treatment for lymphoma are bone marrow suppression (decrease in platelet, white and red blood cells counts), hair loss, and nausea/vomiting.

Created by: Nicole Barr, NP Lymphoma (July 2009)
Reviewed/approved by: Tammy Baltic RN, MS, AOCN and Ranjana Advani, MD (August of 2009)

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