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Cisplatin

Potential side effects of cisplatin:

- **Kidney disease:** The risk of kidney damage is minimized by drinking (or taking iv) about one gallon of fluids daily for 24 hours after each dose.
- **Nausea and vomiting:** Historically cisplatin is one of the most nauseating drugs created. Advances made in about 1990 rendered cisplatin only mildly nauseating for 70% of people. The management of nausea requires good communication between patient and doctor. Please keep track of how much nausea you have (Nausea with or without vomiting, nausea that does or does not interfere with eating) and whether the medicine provided provides no, partial or complete relief.
- **Nerve damage** characterized by numbness, pain or weakness that begins in the toes, then spreads up the feet to the legs. It usually begins after 3-5 doses and gets a little worse after each subsequent dose. This nerve damage usually improves some when the drug is stopped. In order to avoid significant nerve damage you need to tell your doctor if the numbness begins to affect your fingers.
- The magnesium and potassium levels can be lowered by cisplatin and you may require supplementation of potassium or magnesium.
- Cisplatin may cause infertility.
- Cisplatin can damage the hearing. This problem usually begins with ringing in the ears, then progresses to loss of ability to hear high frequency sounds (for example, bells, flutes, violins). If the drug is continued then one can become deaf. You should tell your doctor if you notice ringing in the ears or any loss of hearing. Your hearing can be monitored with formal hearing tests and the drug stopped before hearing loss is significant.
- Hair loss, which may include all body hair.
- Cisplatin can decrease the blood cells produced in the bone marrow. This can lead to
 - 1) Decreased white cells, which would make you more vulnerable to infection. The white blood cell count typically falls about 7 days following treatment and begins to rise about 14 days following treatment. An infection while the white blood cell count is low may be life threatening. You should measure your temperature twice daily and call me if it rises above 100.5. Infection when the white blood cell count is low frequently requires hospitalization and is occasionally fatal.
 - 2) Lower number of red cells, which can give you symptoms of shortness of breath, weakness and fatigue. This can be treated with transfusions or erythropoietin therapy if needed.
 - 3) Lower platelet counts, which can result in easy bruising or bleeding for a longer time. The platelet counts usually fall about 7 days following chemotherapy and rises about 14 days following chemotherapy. Any bleeding that occurs when the platelet count is low may be life threatening and should be reported to me. Occasionally a person may die or suffer from bleeding into the brain as a result of a low platelet count.



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