



KEEP ALL MEDICINE OUT OF THE SIGHT AND REACH OF CHILDREN

Dacogen

What is Dacogen?

Dacogen is a drug used to treat acute myeloid leukaemia.

How Dacogen works

Dacogen is a type of drug called a hypomethylating agent. It works by switching off a protein called DNA methyltransferase. This switches on genes that stop the cancer cells growing and dividing.

How you have Dacogen

You have Dacogen into your bloodstream (intravenously) as a drip over an hour.

You usually have Dacogen as a course of several cycles of treatment. The number of treatment cycles depends on your treatment plan. Most people have at least 4 cycles.

You have Dacogen daily for 5 days. Then you don't have any treatment for the next 23 days. This is one cycle of treatment, which takes 4 weeks. You then start the next treatment cycle. You continue with the treatment for as long as it is working.

Common side effects

More than 10 in 100 people have one or more of these

- An increased risk of getting an infection from a drop in white blood cells – it is harder to fight infections and you can become very ill. You may have headaches, aching muscles, a cough, a sore throat, pain passing urine, or you may feel cold and shivery. If you have a severe infection this can be life threatening.
- **Contact your treatment centre if you have any of these side effects or if your temperature goes above 38°C**
- Tiredness and breathlessness due to a drop in red blood cells (anaemia) – you may need a blood transfusion
- Bruising more easily due to a drop in platelets – you may have nosebleeds, bleeding gums after brushing your teeth, or lots of tiny red spots or bruises on your arms or legs (known as petechia)
- A cough occurs in about 4 out of 10 people (40%)
- Diarrhoea affects 3 out of 10 people (30%) but is usually well controlled with anti sickness medicines
- Headaches affect just over 1 in 10 people (10%)
- Difficulty sleeping
- Low levels of potassium (hypokalaemia) and magnesium (hypomagnesia) in your blood – you will have blood tests to check your levels
- Muscle pain and aching joints
- Loss of fertility – you may not be able to become pregnant or father a child after Dacogen treatment. Talk to your doctor before starting treatment if you think you will want to have a baby in the future



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Occasional side effects

Between 1 and 10 in every 100 people have one or more of these.

- A sore mouth
- Feeling weak, a high temperature and chills
- Infections – including urine infections
- Some people have an allergic reaction while having Dacogen treatment, usually at the first or second treatment – let your treatment team know immediately if you feel hot or have any skin rashes, itching, dizziness, headaches, shivering, breathlessness, anxiety, flushing of the face, or a sudden need to pass urine

Important points to remember

You will not get all the side effects mentioned above. Any that occur may be mild. A side effect may get worse through your course of treatment. Or you may have more side effects as the course goes on. This depends on

- How many times you've had a drug before
- Your general health
- How much of the drug you have (the dose)
- Other drugs you are having

Coping with side effects

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse about all your side effects so that they can help you manage them. They can give you advice or reassure you. Your nurse will give you a contact number to ring if you have any questions or problems. If in doubt, call them.

Other medicines

Tell your doctor about any other medicines you are taking, including vitamins, herbal supplements and over the counter remedies. Some drugs can react together.

Pregnancy and contraception

This drug may have a harmful effect on a developing baby. It is important not to become pregnant or father a child during treatment. Men need to use reliable contraception while having the drug and for about 6 months afterwards. Talk to your doctor or nurse about contraception before starting treatment.

Medical and dental treatment

If you need to go into hospital for any reason other than cancer, always tell the doctors and nurses that you are having chemotherapy. Give them contact details for your cancer doctor.

Talk to your cancer doctor or nurse if you think you need dental treatment. Always tell your dentist you are having chemotherapy.

Immunisations

- You should not have immunisations with live vaccines while you are having this treatment or for at least 6 months afterwards. These include rubella, mumps, measles (usually given together as MMR), BCG, yellow fever and Zostavax (shingles vaccine).



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- You can have other vaccines, but they may not give you as much protection as usual until your immune system has fully recovered from your treatment. It is safe to have the flu vaccine.
- It is safe for you to be in contact with other people who've had live vaccines as injections. There can be problems with vaccines you take by mouth (oral vaccines) but not many people have these now.
- So there is usually no problem in being with any baby or child who has recently had any. You might need to make sure that you aren't in contact with anyone who has had oral polio, cholera or typhoid vaccination recently, particularly if you live abroad.