

# ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY EDUCATION



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## ESTRAMUSTINE

### Name of your medication

Generic name — estramustine (ES-truh-MUS-teen)

Brand name — Emcyt®

### Approved uses

Estramustine is used to treat prostate cancer.

### Dose and schedule

Taking estramustine as instructed is important to allow your treatment to be as effective as possible, so here are some key points to remember.

- Your dose is based on many factors, including your height and weight, overall health, and diagnosis.
- Estramustine should be taken on any empty stomach at least one hour before or two hours after meals. Your doctor may want you to take this medication multiple times throughout the day.
- Estramustine should be taken whole and not crushed, cut, or dissolved. If you are unable to swallow estramustine, talk to your care provider or pharmacist for possible options.
- If you miss a dose of estramustine, **do not** take an extra dose or two doses at one time. Simply take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Be sure to write down if you miss a dose and let your care provider know about any missed doses.

### Storage and handling

Handle estramustine with care. Just like when chemotherapy is given into the vein, this drug can be toxic, and exposure of the drug to others should be limited.

- Store estramustine in the refrigerator (36°F–46°F). Do **not** freeze.
- Keep estramustine out of reach of children and pets.
- Leave estramustine in the provided packaging until it is ready to be taken.
- Whenever possible, you should give estramustine to yourself and follow the steps below. If a family member, friend, or caregiver needs to give the estramustine to you, they also need to follow these steps:
  1. Wash hands with soap and water.
  2. Put on gloves to avoid touching the medication. (Gloves are not necessary if you give the drug to yourself.)
  3. Gently transfer the estramustine from its package to a small medicine or other disposable cup.
  4. Administer the medicine immediately by mouth with water.
  5. Remove gloves and do not use them for anything else.
  6. Throw gloves and medicine cup in household trash.
  7. Wash hands with soap and water.

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- ❑ If a daily pill box or pill reminder is used, a separate one should be used for estramustine. **Do not** mix other medications into the box with estramustine. The person filling the box or reminder should wear gloves. (Gloves are not necessary if you are filling the box or reminder.) When empty, the box or reminder should be washed with soap and water before refilling. Be sure to wash hands with soap and water after the task is complete, whether or not gloves are worn.
- ❑ If you have any unused estramustine, **do not** throw it in the trash and **do not** flush it down the sink or toilet. Talk to your care provider or pharmacist about proper disposal of estramustine.
- ❑ If you are traveling, put your estramustine in a sealed plastic bag. Ask your pharmacist if any additional travel precautions are needed.

### Handling body fluids and waste

Since estramustine remains in your body for several days after it is taken, some of the drug may be present in urine, stool, sweat, or vomit. Once you have started to take estramustine, it is important to follow the instructions below every day for as long as your treatment lasts. This is to keep yourself, loved ones, and the environment as safe as possible.

- ❑ Pregnant women should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- ❑ Toilet and septic systems
  - You may use the same toilet, septic tank, and/or sewer that you usually use. If you have a low-flow toilet, close the lid and flush twice to ensure all waste has been discarded.
  - If the toilet or toilet seat becomes soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet.
  - Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet.
- ❑ If you need a bedpan, be sure your caregiver knows to wear gloves to assist with cleanup and to wash the bedpan with soap and water every day.
- ❑ If you do not have good control of bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb body waste.
- ❑ Wash any skin that has been exposed to body waste or estramustine with soap and water.
- ❑ Linens or clothing that are soiled with body fluids or body waste should be washed separately from other linens and clothing. If you do not have a washer, place the soiled linens in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- ❑ Wash hands with soap and water after touching linens or clothing that may be soiled with body fluids.

### Drug and food interactions

- ❑ Estramustine has many drug interactions. Please inform your care providers of all prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal products.
- ❑ Estramustine should be taken without food, one hour before or two hours after meals.
- ❑ Do not take estramustine with calcium-containing antacids, such as calcium carbonate (TUMS®), or calcium supplements.
- ❑ Talk with your care provider or pharmacist before taking new medications or supplements, or receiving any vaccines.

# ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY EDUCATION



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### Side Effects of Estramustine

The common side effects that have been known to happen in more than 30% of patients taking estramustine are listed in the left side of this table. You **MAY NOT** experience these side effects. Options to help manage any side effects that do occur are included on the right side of this table. These should be discussed with your care provider. If you experience any side effect you cannot manage or that is not listed here, contact your care provider.

Possible Side Effect	Management
<b>Breast swelling or pain in breast or nipple</b>	Notify your care provider if you are experiencing significant pain.
<b>Changes in electrolytes and other laboratory values</b> • Lactate dehydrogenase	<p>Changes in some lab values may occur and will be monitored by a simple blood test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may not feel any symptoms if the changes are mild, and they usually are not a sign of a serious problem.</li> <li>More severe changes may occur, which can be a sign of a serious problem.</li> </ul> <p>Notify your care provider if you have any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shortness of breath</li> <li>Chest discomfort</li> <li>Weakness or fatigue</li> <li>New aches and pains</li> <li>Headaches</li> <li>Dizziness</li> <li>Swelling of your legs or feet</li> <li>Red- or brown-colored urine</li> </ul>
<b>Changes in liver function</b>	<p>Your liver function should be checked periodically by a simple blood test. Contact your care provider if you notice any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yellowing of the skin or whites of your eyes</li> <li>Dark or brown urine</li> <li>Bleeding or bruising</li> </ul>

If you experience ANY uncontrolled side effect, call your physician or healthcare center immediately:

**(INSTITUTIONAL CONTACT INFO)**

### Pregnancy, sexual activity, and contraception

- Men should not get a partner pregnant while taking estramustine. Men and women of childbearing age and potential should use effective contraception during therapy and for a minimum of 7 days after the last dose of estramustine.
- It is safe to hug and kiss. Special precautions may be needed for sexual activity while on oral chemotherapy, and you are encouraged to ask your care provider.

# ORAL CHEMOTHERAPY EDUCATION



## ESTRAMUSTINE

### Obtaining medication

- Talk with your care provider about the process for obtaining your estramustine.

\_\_\_\_\_ (PHARMACY OR SPECIALTY PHARMACY CONTACT INFO)

### Additional resources

**Product prescribing information:** [www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda\\_docs/label/2008/018045s023lbl.pdf](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2008/018045s023lbl.pdf)

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### Additional instructions

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**Important notice:** The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), National Community Oncology Dispensing Association, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources. This guide does not cover all existing information related to the possible uses, directions, doses, precautions, warnings, interactions, adverse effects, or risks associated with this medication and should not substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Provision of this guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of this medication by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. The collaborators are not making any representations with respect to the medications whatsoever, and any and all decisions, with respect to such medications, are at the sole risk of the individual consuming the medication. All decisions related to taking this medication should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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