Melphalan (Alkeran®) is an oral medicine that your doctor prescribed for the treatment of your cancer. Please take your melphalan as directed by your prescriber.

How is this medication taken?

- Take your melphalan at approximately the same time(s) each day.
- Take melphalan on an empty stomach (1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal) with a large glass of water. Take an anti-nausea pill an hour before taking the medicine if the pill makes you sick to your stomach.
- Contact your cancer clinic if you are unable to take melphalan as prescribed, including if you are unable to swallow the tablet.

Are there any drugs or foods I should avoid with melphalan therapy?

- There are multiple drug and herbal interactions with melphalan. Please contact your cancer clinic or the UMCCC oral medications for cancer therapy service if you are taking or interested in taking any new over-the-counter medication, vitamin, or herbal product or if a physician other than your oncologist has prescribed any new medication for you. We will review for the risk of interaction with melphalan. Some examples of medications/herbal products that may interact include: vitamin E, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), and many others, and blood thinners such as warfarin.
**What side effects can occur with melphalan therapy?**

This information does not cover all possible side effects. Refer to the attached information for each chemotherapy agent for further information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Side Effects</th>
<th>What Can I Do?</th>
<th>When to Call your Cancer Clinic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in blood cell counts (white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets)</td>
<td>• Wash hands regularly&lt;br&gt;• Avoid close contact with others who are sick&lt;br&gt;• Avoid activities with high potential for injury and bleeding (e.g. contact sports, etc.)&lt;br&gt;• The clinic will monitor your labs to assess</td>
<td>• Temperature of 100.5°F or higher- CONTACT IMMEDIATELY&lt;br&gt;• Any signs of infection&lt;br&gt;• Unusual tiredness or weakness&lt;br&gt;• Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing&lt;br&gt;• Unusual bleeding or bruising&lt;br&gt;• Dizziness/lightheadedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less Common Side Effects</th>
<th>When to Call your Cancer Clinic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nausea/Vomiting</td>
<td>• Stay well-hydrated&lt;br&gt;• Use anti-nausea medication prescribed by the clinic&lt;br&gt;• Eat smaller, more frequent meals/snacks (avoid empty stomach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver Dysfunction</td>
<td>• The clinic will monitor your labs to assess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulmonary Toxicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More information:
This document should be combined with “What to Expect, A Guide to Oral Chemotherapy Treatment at the University of Michigan” and the “Oral Medications for Cancer Therapy” documents. Ask your nurse or pharmacist for these documents if you did not receive them, or for more information, visit the Patient Education Resource Center in the Cancer Center.

Who to Call With Questions

- For medical emergencies call 911.
- For symptoms or possible side effects related to your medications, please call your Cancer Center clinic.
- For questions about drug coverage, ability to receive the medication, drug interactions with over-the-counter medications, herbal products and new prescription medications or help in remembering to take your medication, please contact the Oral Medications for Cancer Therapy Service at 734-232-6366 or cc-oral-chemo@med.umich.edu.

This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.

©2011 The Regents of the University of Michigan
Document # / Revised February 2012

Oral Anti-Cancer Therapy Service 734-232-6366
cc-oral-chemo@med.umich.edu