

Amifostine (Ethyol)

About This Drug

Amifostine is used to help protect certain body cells from the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation therapy. It is given in the vein (IV).

Possible Side Effects

- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Low blood pressure

Note: *Not all possible side effects are included above.*

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe low blood pressure and other changes in your heart function such as pain in your chest, trouble breathing, abnormal heartbeat, and risk of heart attack. If you are being treated for high blood pressure, you may need to hold your blood pressure medicine.
- Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis are rare but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reaction to this drug may be swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, do not take another dose of this drug. You should get urgent medical treatment.**
- Severe allergic skin reaction, which can be life-threatening. You may develop blisters on your skin that are filled with fluid or a severe red rash all over your body that may be painful.
- Severe nausea and/or vomiting
- Decreased level of calcium in your blood.

Note: *Some of the side effects above are very rare. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.*

Treating Side Effects

- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- If you throw up, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid).



- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your nurse or doctor about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help stop or lessen these symptoms.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry. Ask your doctor for medicine if your rash bothers you.

Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of amifostine with food.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all other prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) you are taking before starting this medicine as there are known drug interactions with amifostine. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.
- There are known interactions of amifostine with blood pressure medicines. Discuss with your doctor if you need to hold your blood pressure medicine before starting treatment with amifostine.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Trouble breathing
- Feeling that your heart is beating fast or in a not normal way (palpitations)
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Chest pain or symptoms of a heart attack. Most heart attacks involve pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes. The pain may go away and come back, or it can be constant. It can feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain. Sometimes pain is felt in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach. **If any of these symptoms last 2 minutes, call 911.**
- Signs of allergic reaction: swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and fatigue (low energy, feeling weak)
- A new rash or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Signs of low calcium such as numbness or tingling around your mouth or in your hands or feet, muscle stiffness, twitching, spasms, or cramps
- If you think you are pregnant

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** It is not known if this drug may harm an unborn child. For this reason, be sure to talk with your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while receiving this drug. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant. When receiving amifostine



in combination with cisplatin, please refer to the medication guide of that agent for more specific information.

- **Breastfeeding warning:** It is not known if this drug passes into breast milk. Women should not breastfeed during treatment because this drug could enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby. When receiving amifostine in combination with cisplatin, please refer to the medication guide of that agent for more specific information.
- **Fertility warning:** In men, this drug may affect your ability to have children in the future. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm banking. When receiving amifostine in combination with cisplatin, please refer to the medication guide of that agent for more specific information.

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