

## Carmustine (BiCNU)

---

### About This Medicine

CARMUSTINE (kar MUS teen) treats some types of cancer. It works by slowing down the growth of cancer cells. It is given in the vein (IV).

This medicine may be used for other purposes; ask your care team if you have questions.

### Possible Side Effects

- Bone marrow suppression. This is a decrease in the number of white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This may raise your risk of infection, make you tired and weak, and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Inflammation (swelling) of the lungs. You may have a dry cough or trouble breathing.
- Changes in your kidney function

**Note:** Each of the side effects above was reported in greater than 1% of people treated with carmustine. All possible side effects are not included. Your side effects may be different depending on your cancer diagnosis, condition, or if you are receiving other medicines in combination. Please discuss any concerns or questions with your care team.

### Warnings and Precautions

- Skin and tissue irritation including redness, pain, warmth, or swelling at the IV site if the medicine leaks out of the vein and into nearby tissue.
- Severe inflammation and/or scarring of the lungs, which can be life-threatening. Your risk of developing this may be higher if you have a history of lung disease, and/or received high doses of this medicine. Sometimes these changes may not be seen for many years and may be permanent and not reversible.
- Severe bone marrow suppression
- This medicine may raise your risk of getting a second cancer.

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

## Important Information

- This medicine may be present in the urine, stool and other body fluids such as blood, vomit, semen, and vaginal fluids. Take precautions to prevent others from coming in contact with your medicine or your body fluids. Follow safety precautions during your treatment and for as long as directed by your care team after your treatment. If you take a pill each day, follow these precautions every day.

## Treating Side Effects

- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine pale yellow.
- 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 care team about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help stop or lessen these symptoms.
- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- To decrease the risk of infection, wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid close contact with people who have a cold, the flu, or other infections.
- Take your temperature as your care team tells you, and whenever you feel like you may have a fever.
- To help decrease the risk of bleeding, use a soft toothbrush. Check with your care team before using dental floss.
- Be very careful when using knives or tools.
- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.

## Food and Medicine Interaction

- There are no known interactions of carmustine with food.
- Check with your care team 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 medicine interactions with carmustine. Also, check with your care team before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.

## When to Call Your Care Team

Call your care team if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher



- Chills
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Symptoms of a seizure such as confusion, blacking out, passing out, loss of hearing or vision, blurred vision, unusual smells or tastes (such as burning rubber), trouble talking, tremors or shaking in parts or all of the body, repeated body movements, tense muscles that do not relax, and loss of control of urine and bowels. **If you or your family member suspects you are having a seizure, call 911 right away.**
- Pain in your chest
- Dry and/or hacking cough
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing
- Rapid, shallow breathing during exercise or while at rest
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Muscle and/or joint aching
- Clubbing (rounded and enlarged fingertips or toes)
- Weight loss over a long period of time
- While you are getting this medicine, please tell your care team right away if you have any pain, redness, or swelling at the site of the IV infusion
- Decreased or very dark urine

## Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** This medicine can cause serious birth defects. If you can become pregnant, use birth control while taking this medicine and for 6 months after the last dose. If you can get your partner pregnant, use birth control while taking this medicine and for at least 3 months after the last dose. Tell your care team right away if you think you might be pregnant or think your partner might be pregnant.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** Talk with your care team about breastfeeding during treatment. You may need to stop breastfeeding.
- **Fertility warning:** This medicine may affect your ability to have children in the future. If you plan to have children, talk with your care team.

Revised June 2025

