

## **For the Patient: GOCABR**

Other Names: Alternative Treatment of Gynecological Malignancies Using Carboplatin and Paclitaxel NAB (Abraxane®)

**GO** = Gynecologic **O**ncology  
**C** = **C**arboplatin  
**ABR** = **A**braxane® (paclitaxel NAB)

### **ABOUT THIS TREATMENT**

#### **What are these drugs used for?**

- Carboplatin and paclitaxel NAB are drugs used to treat cancers of the ovaries, endometrium, and cervix. They are given directly into the vein, or intravenously (IV).
- Paclitaxel NAB is a nanoparticle, albumin-bound paclitaxel often referred to as nab-paclitaxel or Abraxane®, which is the brand name of the drug.
- Paclitaxel NAB is used for patients with previous unmanageable hypersensitivity reactions to paclitaxel. These reactions are often due to a component of the paclitaxel solution, which is not used in paclitaxel NAB.

#### **How do these drugs work?**

- Carboplatin and paclitaxel NAB are anticancer drugs that work by interfering with the genetic material of replicating cells and preventing an increase in the number of cancer cells.

### **INTENDED BENEFITS**

- This therapy is being given to destroy and/or limit the growth of cancer cells in your body. This treatment may improve your current symptoms, and delay the onset of new symptoms.

### **TREATMENT SUMMARY**

#### **How are these drugs given?**

- Your treatment plan consists of 6 chemotherapy “cycles”. Each cycle lasts 3 weeks (21 days). In some cases, it may be decided that each cycle last 4 weeks (28 days) instead. Your doctor would discuss this with you.
- For each cycle, you will have two medications given to you intravenously (through the vein) on day 1.
  - Paclitaxel NAB is given first, and is given intravenously over approximately 30 minutes.
  - CARBOplatin is given second, and is given intravenously over approximately 30 minutes.

**The calendar on the following page outlines your overall treatment plan.**

**Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cycle 1:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
<b>Blood Test</b> <b>Paclitaxel NAB</b> <b>&amp;</b> <b>Carboplatin</b>	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo
Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo
Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21
No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo

**This 21-day (or 28-day) cycle will repeat until your treatment is completed, as determined by your oncologist.**

**What will happen when I get my drugs?**

- A blood test is done within one month of starting treatment.
- A blood test is also done each cycle, on or before the first day of each cycle. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects.
- Your very first treatment will take longer than other treatments because a nurse will be reviewing the possible side effects of your chemotherapy plan and will discuss with you how to manage them. *It is a good idea to bring someone with you to your first chemotherapy appointment.*
- You will be given a prescription for anti-nausea medications (to be filled at your regular pharmacy). Please bring your anti-nausea medications with you for each treatment. Your nurse will tell you when to take the anti-nausea medication.
- You will also need to take your anti-nausea drugs at home after therapy. It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.

## **SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM**

Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. The ones listed below are particularly important for you to be aware of as they are directly related to the common actions of the drugs in your treatment plan.

Your doctor will review the risks of treatment and possible side effects with you before starting treatment. The chemotherapy nurse will review possible side effects of the drugs and how to manage those side effects with you on the day you receive your first treatment.

<b>SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>Allergic reactions</b> may very rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction are dizziness, feeling faint, confusion, shortness of breath, and wheezing. This may occur immediately or several hours after receiving the drugs. It can occur after the first dose, or after many doses.	Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving the drugs or contact your doctor immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.
Paclitaxel NAB <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.	Tell your nurse or doctor <b>immediately</b> if you feel burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.
<b>Numbness or tingling of the fingers or toes</b> commonly occurs. This will slowly (over several weeks) return to normal once your treatments are over.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be careful when handling items that are sharp, hot, or cold.</li><li>• Tell your doctor at your next visit, especially if you have trouble with buttons, writing, or picking up small objects.</li></ul>
<b>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for up to 24 hours. Nausea may last longer for some patients. It is usually mild to moderate.	You may be given a prescription for an anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li><li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li><li>• Try the ideas in <i>Practical Tips to Manage Nausea</i>*.</li></ul>

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Constipation</b> or <b>diarrhea</b> may occur during your treatment.</p>	<p>To help constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise if you can.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids (8 cups a day).</li> <li>• Try ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Manage Constipation*</i>.</li> </ul> <p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts</li> <li>• Eat low fibre foods &amp; avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Choices to Help Manage Diarrhea*</i>.</li> <li>• Tell your doctor promptly if you have pain, bleeding, or very frequent bowel movements.</li> </ul>
<p>Your <b>white blood cells</b> will decrease after your treatment. They usually return to normal after your last treatment. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, <b>you are at greater risk of having an infection.</b></p>	<p>To help prevent infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.</li> <li>• Take care of your skin and mouth.</li> <li>• Call your doctor <b>immediately</b> at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning when you pass urine.</li> </ul>
<p>Your <b>platelets</b> may decrease during or after your treatment. They will return to normal after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. <b>You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</b></p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to bruise, cut, or burn yourself.</li> <li>• Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose.</li> <li>• Avoid constipation.</li> <li>• Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene.</li> </ul> <p>Some medications such as ASA (e.g. ASPIRIN®) or ibuprofen (e.g. ADVIL®) may increase your risk of bleeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed by your doctor (e.g. <b>ASA for your heart</b>).</li> <li>• For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g. TYLENOL®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.</li> </ul>

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Sore mouth</b> may occur during treatment. This is common. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. <b>Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. If your gums bleed, use gauze instead of a brush. Use baking soda instead of toothpaste.</li> <li>• Make a mouthwash with ½ teaspoon baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day.</li> <li>• Try soft, bland foods like puddings, milkshakes and cream soups.</li> <li>• Avoid spicy, crunchy or acidic food, and very hot or cold foods.</li> <li>• Try ideas in <i>Easy to Chew, Easy to Swallow Food Ideas</i>*.</li> </ul>

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS DURING TREATMENT	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.</p>	<p>Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</p>
<p><b>Muscle or joint pain</b> may sometimes occur a few days after your treatment.</p>	<p>You may take acetaminophen (e.g., <b>TYLENOL®</b>) every 4-6 hours to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.</p>
<p><b>Swelling</b> of hands, feet, or lower legs may rarely occur if your body retains extra fluid.</p>	<p>If swelling is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate your feet when sitting.</li> <li>• Avoid tight clothing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Loss of appetite</b> sometimes occurs.</p>	<p>Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i>.*</p>
<p><b>Tiredness and lack of energy</b> may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout</i> or <i>Your Bank to Energy Savings: Helping People with Cancer Handle Fatigue</i>.*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair loss</b> is common and may begin within a few days or weeks of treatment. Your hair may thin or you may lose it completely. Your scalp may feel tender. Hair loss may occur on your face and body. Hair usually grows back once your treatments are over and sometimes between treatments. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<p>Refer to <i>Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</i>.* You may also want to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply mineral oil to your scalp to reduce itching.</li> <li>• If you lose your eyelashes and eyebrows, protect your eyes from dust and grit with a broad-rimmed hat and glasses.</li> </ul>

**\*Please ask your chemotherapy nurse, dietitian, or pharmacist for a copy.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT**

- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to carboplatin, paclitaxel NAB, paclitaxel, or human albumin before starting this treatment:
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of carboplatin or paclitaxel NAB.
- This treatment may cause **menopause** in women.
- Carboplatin and paclitaxel NAB may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with these drugs. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- Tell doctors, dentists, or other health professionals that you are being treated with carboplatin and paclitaxel NAB before you receive any treatment from them.

### **Medication Interactions:**

- Other drugs may **interact** with carboplatin and paclitaxel NAB. Drugs such as warfarin (COUMADIN®) and phenytoin (DILANTIN®) may **interact** with carboplatin. Tell your doctor if you are taking this or any other drugs as you may need extra blood test or your dose may need to be changed. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.

## **THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS VERY IMPORTANT**

### **SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:**

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heartbeat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer); chills, cough, pain or burning when you pass urine.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools, blood in urine, pinpoint red spots on skin, extensive bruising.
- Signs of **heart or lung problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, chest pressure, shortness of breath, or difficulty in breathing, swelling of ankles, or fainting.

### **SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:**

- **Numbness or tingling** in **face, feet, or hands** or **weakness in facial muscles**.
- **Changes in eyesight**, sensitivity to light, or eye pain.
- **Ringings in your ears**, or hearing loss
- **Skin rash** or persistent **itching**.
- Unexpected **swelling** in any of your limbs.
- Uncontrolled **nausea, vomiting, constipation, or diarrhea**.
- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- **Stomach pain** not controlled by antacids or acetaminophen.
- **Worsening numbness or tingling** in feet or hands.
- **Muscle or joint pain**, which is severe despite mild pain-relievers.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as swelling of feet or lower legs.
- **Sores** that do not heal or are slow to heal.

**CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:**

- Dry mouth, increased thirst, or decreased urine.
- Easy bruising or minor bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, pain, or sores where the needle was placed.
- Redness, swelling, pain, or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth, or throat or difficulty swallowing comfortably.
- Itching or skin rash (with or without itching).

**If you experience symptoms or changes in your body that have not been described above but worry you, or if any symptoms are severe, contact:**

\_\_\_\_\_ at telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_