

For the Patient: HNLACARTW

Other Names: Summary for Treatment of Locally Advanced Squamous Cell Cancer with Concurrent **Weekly** CARBOplatin and Radiation

HN = Head and Neck (Tumour Group)

LA = Locally Advanced

CA = CARBOplatin

RT = Radiation Therapy

W = **Weekly** treatment

ABOUT THIS TREATMENT

What is this treatment used for?

- CARBOplatin is an intravenous chemotherapy medication used for many types of cancer. In this protocol, radiation is the standard treatment and CARBOplatin is used as a radio-sensitizing agent, which means it works along with radiation, and as a cancer-killing agent.

How do radiation and CARBOplatin work?

The radiation kills cancer cells and stops them from growing. CARBOplatin works by interfering with the genetic material of cancer cells and prevents their growth. When combined with radiation, CARBOplatin works in synergy with radiation to eradicate tumour cells.

INTENDED BENEFITS

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

HNLACART TREATMENT SUMMARY

How are these treatments given?

- CARBOplatin is given intravenously (via the vein) once weekly for up to seven cycles.
- Radiation is given daily Monday to Friday, with weekends and holidays off, for the duration of the treatment.

What will happen when I get my drugs?

- A blood test is done within one month prior to starting treatment.
- A blood test is done prior to each treatment of CARBOplatin. You will be given a lab requisition for these tests.
- The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects.
- You will have been given a prescription for anti-nausea medication (filled at your regular pharmacy) that you bring in each time for your treatment. Your nurse will tell you when to take the anti-nausea medication. It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.

TREATMENT PROTOCOL

DATE (dd/mm/yr)	TREATMENT PLAN	
Radiation: 35 fractions, 5 days per week		
	Week 1	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 2	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 3	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 4	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 5	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 6	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day
	Week 7	CARBOplatin infusion x 1 day

CHEMOTHERAPY SIDE EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT

Are there any risks?

- Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. The ones listed in the following tables are particularly important for you to be aware of.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
When your white blood cells are low, you are at greater risk of having an infection . White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection.	To help prevent infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.• Take care of your skin and mouth.• Avoid crowds and people who are sick.• Call your doctor immediately at the first sign of infection such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by an oral thermometer), chills, cough or burning when you pass urine.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Normal platelets help your blood to clot normally after an injury (e.g. cut). When the platelet count is low, you may be more likely to bruise or bleed.</p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try not to bruise, cut or burn yourself. • Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose. • Avoid constipation. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene. <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"> • Do not stop taking any medication prescribed by your doctor. (e.g. ASA for your heart). • For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) first, but occasional use of ibuprofen is acceptable.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment and may last for up to 24 hours. Nausea may last longer for some patients (ie. delayed nausea and vomiting)</p>	<p>You will be given a prescription for 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids • Eat and drink often in small amounts • Try the ideas in <i>Practical Tips to Help Manage Nausea</i>.* <p>Your doctor may manage delayed nausea and vomiting differently. Be sure to let your doctor know if you experience this.</p>
<p>Diarrhea may sometimes occur. Diarrhea can lead to dehydration.</p>	<p>To help manage diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids • Eat and drink often in small amounts • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help Manage Diarrhea</i>.*
<p>Constipation may sometimes occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can • Drink plenty of fluids • Try ideas in <i>Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation</i>.*

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Sore mouth may occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Make a mouthwash with ½ teaspoonful baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day. • Try soft bland foods like puddings, milkshakes and cream soups. • Avoid spicy, crunchy or acidic food and very hot or cold foods. <p>Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Try with a Sore Mouth*</i></p>
<p>Hair loss is rare with CARBOplatin. If you lose hair, it will grow back once you stop treatment with CARBOplatin. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<p>If hair loss is a problem, refer to <i>Hair Loss due to Chemotherapy.*</i></p>
<p>Numbness or tingling of the fingers or toes may rarely occur. This will slowly return to normal once your treatments are over. This may take several months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful when handling items that are sharp, hot or cold. <p>Tell your doctor at your next visit, especially if you have trouble with buttons, writing or picking up small objects.</p>

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

RADIATION SIDE EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT:

Are there any risks?

- Radiation can only cause side effects in the part of the body where it is delivered.
- Smoking is not advisable because it can make your side effects worse and can make the treatment less effective. Ask your doctor, radiation therapist, or nurse for more information; or visit www.quitnow.ca
- Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any radiation treatment. The ones listed in the following table are particularly important for you to be aware of.

RADIATION SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Skin irritation may occur while receiving radiation therapy, since all radiation must pass through your skin. The side effects will vary depending on amount of radiation given, the area of the body treated, the size of the treatment area, and whether chemotherapy has been previously administered. Skin may feel warm and sensitive and colour may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathe using lukewarm water and mild, unscented soap. Pat skin dry with a soft towel. • Wear loose, comfortable clothing. • Protect skin from direct sunlight and wind. Avoid extremes of hot or cold (heating pads, icepacks, hot tubs, saunas, etc.). • You may swim if skin is intact. • Avoid perfume, alcohol, astringents and adhesives to the treated areas during treatment. • Be careful not to remove the skin markings placed by the Radiation Therapists. • The Radiation Therapists will give you information about skin care. • If your skin begins to peel or blister, call the nursing line.
<p>Fatigue is a common side effect. This may last for several weeks after treatment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing rest, good nutrition, and fluid intake can help you manage this best. <p>Try the ideas in <i>Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout</i>.*</p>

RADIATION SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Dry Mouth (xerostomia) may occur. If your salivary glands were in the treated area, you may develop a dry mouth. This dryness may be permanent. A dry mouth can lead to oral problems, so consult your dental team to help you manage these problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decrease in salivary flow can lead to long term problem with dry mouth. A clean, well-hydrated mouth may prevent complications from cancer treatment. • You may need to moisten your mouth often, especially when eating and talking. • To aid in swallowing, foods may be softened with liquids such as skim milk, broth, or water. Foods with some bulk may be easier to swallow than liquids. • Avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages which may cause dryness. Avoid carbonated beverages with sugar. Avoid diet drinks with phosphoric and citric acids.
<p>Mouth Sores, commonly known as canker sores, may occur. These can become painful and may make it difficult to eat enough food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early detection and treatment of oral infections will diminish the severity of mouth sores and pain associated with it. Avoid commercial mouthwashes because they have a high alcohol content and can dry and irritate the oral tissues. • If you develop mouth or throat pain, please tell your oncologist. <p>Refer to <i>Dry Mouth and Mouth Pain from Cancer Treatments*</i></p>
<p>Loss of Taste may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tumours involving the 5th, 7th, 9th and 10th cranial nerves, radiation to the head and neck areas, and chemotherapy can all contribute to loss of taste sensation. <p>Refer to <i>Food Ideas to Cope with Taste and Smell Changes.*</i></p>
<p>Swallowing Problems may occur. If you develop scar tissue in the throat, this may cause difficulty with swallowing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretching exercises may help with this problem. • Consult a speech pathologist for assessment and advice.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS VERY IMPORTANT

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

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heartbeat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- Signs of a **stroke** such as sudden onset of severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in arm or leg.
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by oral thermometer), shaking chills, severe sore throat, productive cough (coughing up thick or green sputum), cloudy or foul smelling urine, painful, tender or swollen red skin wounds or sores.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools, blood in urine, pinpoint red spots on skin, extensive bruising.
- Signs of a **blood clot** such as tenderness or hardness over a vein, calf swelling and tenderness, sudden onset of cough, chest pain or shortness of breath.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat.
- **Seizures** or **loss of consciousness**.

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

- **Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting** or **diarrhea**.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Signs of **bladder problems** such as changes in urination, painful burning sensation, presence of blood or abdominal pain.
- Increased **sore throat** or **mouth** that makes it difficult to swallow comfortably.

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

- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Ringing in your ears or hearing problems.
- Signs of anemia such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Skin rash or itching.
- Numbness or tingling in feet or hands or painful leg cramps.

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: _____