

## For the Patient: LUAVPC

Other Names: First-Line Treatment of Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) with Carboplatin and Paclitaxel

**LU = Lung**  
**AV = AdVanced**  
**PC = Paclitaxel, Carboplatin**

### **ABOUT THIS MEDICATION**

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

LUAVPC is an intravenous (through the vein) drug treatment used to treat Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer. The goal of this treatment is to help control or shrink the cancer and some of the symptoms caused by it.

Carboplatin and paclitaxel are offered to people who have a good performance status. Performance status is a measure of how well a person is able to perform their usual daily activities.

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

Carboplatin is an anticancer drug that works by *preventing* the synthesis of DNA that is needed for cancer cells to divide.

Paclitaxel is an anticancer drug that works by *preventing* the replication of DNA that is needed for cancer cells to divide.

### **INTENDED BENEFITS**

This treatment is being given to destroy and/or slow down the growth of cancer cells in your body. This treatment can help with controlling some of the symptoms the cancer may be causing, such as pain, coughing, wheezing, difficulty swallowing, weight loss and fatigue. It can also delay or prevent new symptoms from starting. Research has shown that patients may live longer after receiving this chemotherapy treatment.

### **LUAVPC TREATMENT SUMMARY**

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

- Your treatment plan consists of up to 6 chemotherapy “cycles”. Each cycle lasts 3 weeks (21 days).
- For each cycle, you will have the two medications given to you intravenously (through the vein) on Day 1.
  - Paclitaxel is given first, and is given intravenously over three hours (180 minutes). To help prevent allergic reactions, before paclitaxel, you will be given two intravenous pre-medications.

- Carboplatin is given last, and is given intravenously over half-an-hour (30 minutes).

**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 before Day 1 of each cycle.
- The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood test results 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 also need to take your anti-nausea drugs at home after therapy. It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it happens, so follow directions closely.

**LUAVPC TREATMENT PROTOCOL**

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

**Cycle 1:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
<b>Blood Test Premedications, Paclitaxel, 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 cycle will repeat up to 5 more times**

## **CHEMOTHERAPY SIDE EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Are there any risks?**

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

<b>SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS</b>	<b>How common is it?</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>
Your <b>white blood cells</b> may decrease 8-11 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal in 3 weeks. 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>	Very Common	To help prevent infection: <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 by gently washing regularly.</li> <li>• Avoid crowds and people who are sick.</li> <li>• Call your doctor <b>immediately</b> at the first sign of an <b>infection</b> such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), chills, cough or burning when you pass urine.</li> </ul>
Your <b>platelets</b> may decrease 8-11 days after your treatment. They usually return to normal in 3 weeks. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. <b>You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</b>	Very Common	To help prevent bleeding problems: <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.</li> </ul> Some medications such as ASA (e.g., ASPIRIN®) or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) may increase your risk of bleeding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed to you 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	How common is it?	MANAGEMENT
<p><b>Allergic reactions</b> to Paclitaxel often occur. Signs of an allergic reaction include flushing, rash, itching, swelling and breathing problems. These allergic reactions most often occur during the first hour of treatment.</p>	Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dexamethasone is used to prevent allergic reactions. You will be given Dexamethasone before you receive Paclitaxel.</li> <li>• You will also be given other drugs to help prevent an allergic reaction. One may make you drowsy.</li> <li>• Your nurse will monitor you for any signs that you may be developing an allergic reaction while receiving Paclitaxel.</li> <li>• Tell your nurse or doctor <b><i>immediately</i></b> if you notice any of the listed symptoms.</li> </ul>
<p>Paclitaxel contains <b>alcohol</b> and may cause drowsiness.</p>	Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not drive a car or operate machinery soon after treatment.</li> </ul>
<p>Paclitaxel <b>burns</b> if it leaks under the skin.</p>	Very rare	<p>Tell your nurse <b><i>immediately</i></b> if you feel pain, burning, stinging, or any other change while the drug is being given.</p>

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
<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 become totally bald. Your scalp may feel tender. You may lose hair on your face and body. Your hair will grow back once your treatments are over and sometimes between treatments. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<p>Very Common</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>• Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.</li> <li>• Protect your scalp with a hat, scarf or wig in cold weather. Some extended health plans will pay part of the cost of a wig.</li> <li>• Cover your head or apply sunblock on sunny days.</li> <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>
<p><b>Nausea and vomiting</b> may occur after your treatment and may last for 24 hours.</p>	<p>Common</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 to treat it once it has happened, so follow directions closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Try the ideas in <i>“Food Choices to Control Nausea”</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Numbness or tingling</b> of the fingers or toes may occur. This almost always returns to normal, slowly, once your treatments are over. This may take several months.</p>	<p>Common</p>	<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>
<p><b>Muscle or joint pain</b> may occur a few days after your treatment.</p>	<p>Common</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may take acetaminophen (e.g. TYLENOL®) or ibuprofen (e.g. ADVIL®) for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your usually daily activities.</li> </ul>

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
<b>Constipation</b> or <b>diarrhea</b> may occur.	Common	To help constipation: <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>“Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation”</i>.</li> </ul> To help diarrhea: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Avoid high fibre foods.</li> </ul>
<b>Tiredness</b> or lack of energy may occur.	Common	<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>“Your Bank of Energy Savings: How People with Cancer can Handle Fatigue”</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Loss of appetite</b> and <b>weight loss</b> are common with Paclitaxel.	Common	Try ideas in <i>High Energy High Protein Ideas</i> and in <i>Healthy Eating Using High Energy, High Protein Foods</i> .
<b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.	Uncommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</li> </ul>
<b>Swelling</b> of hands, feet or lower legs may occur if your body retains extra fluid.	Uncommon	If swelling is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate your feet when resting.</li> <li>• Avoid tight clothing.</li> </ul>
<b>Sore mouth</b> 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.	Uncommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush.</li> <li>• Make a mouthwash with ½ teaspoon baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day.</li> </ul>

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT**

### **What other drugs can interact with LUAVPC?**

- Other drugs such as warfarin (Coumadin®) and phenytoin (DILANTIN®) may interact with LUAVPC. Tell your doctor if you are taking these or other drugs as you may need extra blood tests, your dose may need to be changed or your treatment may need to be held for a few days.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new prescription or non-prescription drugs.

### **Other important things to know:**

- The drinking of alcohol (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of this treatment.
- This treatment may cause sterility in men and menopause in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before starting treatment.
- This treatment may damage sperm and may cause harm to the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use birth control while you are undergoing treatment. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- Tell all doctors or dentists you see that you being treated with carboplatin and paclitaxel before you receive treatment of any form.

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

- 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 or pinpoint red spots on skin.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** soon after a treatment including flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, face swelling or breathing problems.

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

- **Changes in eyesight.**
- **Skin rash or itching.**
- Ringing in your ears or **hearing problems.**
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Uncontrolled **nausea, vomiting** or diarrhea.
- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- **Stomach pain** not controlled by antacids or acetaminophen.
- **Numbness or tingling** in feet or hands.
- **Muscle or joint pain**, which is severe or bothersome.

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

- Easy bruising or bleeding.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed or along the arm.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Skin rash or 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 \_\_\_\_\_