

For the Patient: **LUAVPMTN**

Other Names: Maintenance Therapy of Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) with Pemetrexed

LU = LUng
AV = AdVanced
P = Pemetrexed
MTN = MainTeNance

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What is this drug used for?

LUAVPMTN is an intravenous (through the vein) maintenance drug treatment for advanced non-small cell lung cancer. It is given after your cancer has been successfully treated with an initial chemotherapy treatment.

How does this drug work?

Pemetrexed is an anticancer drug that belongs to a group of drugs called antimetabolites. These work by *interrupting* the synthesis of DNA that is needed for cancer cells to multiply and divide.

INTENDED BENEFITS

This treatment is being given to keep the cancer from progressing, once it has been successfully controlled with an initial chemotherapy treatment. Research has shown that patients may have prolonged remission of their cancer, and may live longer after receiving this treatment.

LUAVPMTN TREATMENT SUMMARY

Before your treatment begins:

The table below outlines the medications you need to take before your chemotherapy begins:

- You must be on both folic acid and vitamin B12 before starting chemotherapy to help protect your healthy cells from pemetrexed.
- You must also be taking dexamethasone to prevent skin rash.

MEDICATION	WHERE TO GET IT	HOW TO TAKE IT
Folic Acid 0.4 mg tablets	At your regular pharmacy, without a prescription	Take one tablet (0.4 mg) once daily . Start <i>one week</i> before your first treatment and stop <i>three weeks</i> after your last treatment.
Vitamin B12 1000 mcg (µg) injection	At your regular pharmacy, behind the pharmacy counter, without a prescription	Your doctor or nurse will inject this into your muscle once every 9 weeks . Start <i>one week</i> before your first treatment and stop <i>three weeks</i> after your last treatment.
Dexamethasone 4 mg tablets	At your regular pharmacy, with a doctor's prescription	For each treatment cycle, take 1 tablet twice daily for 3 days – the day before treatment, the day of treatment and the day after treatment (unless otherwise instructed). Always take dexamethasone with food.

How is this drug given?

- Pemetrexed is a clear liquid that is given as an infusion once every 3 weeks.
- Each 3-week period is called one “cycle”.
- For each cycle, you will have pemetrexed given to you intravenously (through the vein) over 10 minutes on Day 1 only.

What will happen when I get this drug?

- A blood test is done within one month of starting treatment.
- A blood test is also done before Day 1 of each cycle.
- For the first two cycles of treatment, an additional blood test will be done once a week.
- 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.*

LUAVPMTN TREATMENT PROTOCOL

Start Date: _____

Cycle 1:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
<u>Blood test</u> Pemetrexed	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
<u>Blood test</u> 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
<u>Blood test</u> No Chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo	No chemo

This 21-day cycle will continue to repeat as long as you are benefiting from treatment and not having too many side effects

**(weekly blood tests may not be required after Cycle #2 –
this will be up to your oncologist)**

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.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS	How common is it?	MANAGEMENT
Your white blood cells may decrease a few days after your treatment. They usually return to normal in 2-3 weeks. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, you are at greater risk of having an infection.	Uncommon	To help prevent infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom. • Avoid crowds and people who are sick. • Call your doctor <i>immediately</i> at the first sign of an <i>infection</i> such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), chills, cough or burning when you pass urine.
Your platelets 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. You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.	Uncommon	To help prevent bleeding problems: <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. Avoid taking ASA (eg: ASPIRIN®) or Ibuprofen (eg: ADVIL®), <i>unless prescribed by your doctor.</i>

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
Tiredness and lack of energy may occur.	Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. Try the ideas in “<i>Your Bank of Energy Savings: How People with Cancer can Handle Fatigue</i>”.
Loss of appetite and weight loss may occur and may persist after discontinuation of pemetrexed.	Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try the ideas in “<i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i>”.
Skin rashes may sometimes occur.	Common	<p>You will be given dexamethasone, a steroid which will help decrease your chance of having a rash. A mild rash may still occur. To help itching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can use calamine lotion. If very irritating, call your doctor during office hours. Otherwise, make sure to mention it at your next visit.
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed in your vein.	Uncommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.	Uncommon	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. <i>It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it has happened, so follow directions closely.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drink plenty of liquids. Eat and drink often in small amounts. Try the ideas in “<i>Food Choices to Control Nausea</i>”.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
Diarrhea may sometimes occur.	Uncommon	To help diarrhea: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>“Food Ideas to Help with Diarrhea during Chemotherapy”</i>.
Sore mouth may sometimes occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth or in the throat. <i>Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</i>	Uncommon	<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 teaspoon 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.
Hair loss is rare. If there is hair loss, your hair will grow back once you stop treatment. Colour and texture may change.	Rare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush. • Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms. • Refer to the pamphlet For the Patient: <i>“Hair loss due to chemotherapy”</i>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT

What other drugs can interact with LUAVPMTN?

- Other drugs such as ibuprofen (ADVIL®) may interact with LUAVPMTN. Tell your doctor if you are taking this or any 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 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 and for *3 months afterwards*. 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 pemetrexed 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), shaking chills, severe sore throat, productive cough, pain or burning when you pass urine, cloudy or foul smelling urine.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; extensive bruising; blood in urine or pinpoint red spots on skin.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heartbeat, face swelling or breathing problems.
- 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.

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

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- Signs of **lung problems** such as shortness of breath, wheezing or coughing.
- **Skin rash** or **itching**.

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

- Easy bruising or minor bleeding.
- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation.
- Redness, swelling, pain or sores on your lips, tongue, mouth or throat.
- Numbness or tingling in feet or hands.

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 _____