

5-FU & XELODA: Side Effects vs. Symptoms

SIDE EFFECTS

During your first or second administration of 5-FU or 14 day cycle of Xeloda, it is common to have mild/moderate nausea and/or diarrhea.

After your first or second administration, it is common to experience:

COMMON

- ✓ Mild to moderate diarrhea
- ✓ Mucositis or stomatitis (mouth sores)
- ✓ Anemia (low red blood cells)
- ✓ Neutropenia (low white blood cells)
- ✓ Thrombocytopenia (low platelets)
- ✓ Mild to moderate nausea and vomiting
- ✓ Hand and foot syndrome (capecitabine)
- ✓ Sensitivity to light

RARE

- ✓ Hair thinning or loss
- ✓ Nail changes
- ✓ Darkening of the skin

TREATMENTS

Talk to your doctor about ways to reduce the effects of these side effects.

- Supportive care for common side effects
- Treating individual symptoms

Some patients are unable to metabolize 5-FU or Xeloda (capecitabine) as expected. During treatment, prolonged or enhanced exposure due to mutations in the enzymes responsible for normal metabolism of 5-FU or Xeloda can result in early-onset severe toxicity or death.

While it is common for side effects to occur to a mild or moderate degree with 5-FU or Xeloda, if you find that you are having a moderate to severe reaction on your first or second round of chemotherapy you should contact your healthcare provider immediately. This checklist will help you determine whether you are experiencing a side effect of the treatment or a symptom of toxicity.

SYMPTOMS OF EARLY-ONSET SEVERE TOXICITY

These can be symptoms of life-threatening toxicity especially if they occur during the first or second round of treatment. **TALK TO YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IMMEDIATELY if you think are experiencing these symptoms as it is critical that you receive treatment as soon as possible.**

These symptoms can result in septic shock or organ failure.

- ✓ Diarrhea more than 7 times what is normal for you and/or incontinence
- ✓ Mucositis- oral and/or anal that interferes with eating, drinking, swallowing or daily activities
- ✓ Nausea to the point where you are unable to eat or drink
- ✓ Vomiting more than 6 times
- ✓ Bleeding (hemorrhage), including black tarry stools or "coffee ground" vomit
- ✓ Severe hand and foot syndrome, including pain, blisters, bleeding and peeling that interferes with daily activities
- ✓ Cardiac arrhythmias (irregular heart beats), chest pain or heart attack, acute pulmonary edema, congestive heart failure, cardiac arrest
- ✓ Neurologic cerebellar syndrome (uncoordination), dizziness, queasiness, disorientation, seizures, coma

TREATMENTS

- Supportive care for life threatening toxicities
- Uridine triacetate, which must be given within 96 hours of your last dose of 5-FU or Xeloda and will reduce or prevent further toxicity from developing.

Many patients are able to receive additional cycles of 5-FU or Xeloda despite having had early-onset severe toxicity.

Please discuss treatment options with your doctor.

