



## For the Patient: BRAVNAV

Other names: BRAVNAV

NAV Vinorelbine (NAVELBINE®)

### BC Cancer Agency

#### Uses:

- BRAVNAV is an intravenous chemotherapy drug treatment, given in the hope of destroying breast cancer cells that have spread to other parts of your body. This treatment may improve your overall survival and help manage your symptoms.

#### Treatment Plan:

- Your treatment plan consists of chemotherapy cycles starting every 3 weeks for a total of 6-8 chemotherapy cycles (about 4-6 months). You will need to receive treatment on day 1 and day 8 of each cycle.
- This drug is given intravenously at every visit. For each cycle, you will need to have a blood test and see your oncologist before the treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects.
- Each treatment takes about 15 minutes. You will be given a prescription for anti-nausea drugs to take 30 minutes before the treatment, if needed.

#### Instructions:

- If you need an anti-nausea drug, bring your pills with you to take before each treatment. You may also need to take your anti-nausea pills at home after therapy. Nausea is, however, not a frequent problem with this regimen.
- Drink reasonable amounts of fluids for the first day or two after chemotherapy (8 or more cups a day).
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs. Other drugs such as Phenytoin (DILANTIN®), Warfarin (COUMADIN®), and Digoxin (LANOXIN®) may interact with BRAVNAV.
- You may drink small amounts of alcohol, as it will not affect the safety or usefulness of your treatment.
- Tell other doctors or dentists that you are being treated with BRAVNAV before you receive any treatment from them.
- If you are still having menstrual periods, BRAVNAV may cause your ovaries to stop working, resulting in menopausal symptoms (such as hot flashes) and infertility. Your periods may stop. **This may be permanent**, especially if you are 40 years of age or older. Even if you have stopped having periods after treatment, if you were fertile prior to chemotherapy, you may be able to conceive a pregnancy. Use birth control (but **not** birth control pills) if you could become pregnant, even if you have stopped menstruating because of chemotherapy. Do not breast feed during treatment. Talk to your doctor if you have questions about fertility and birth control after treatment.

#### Serious Risks of Treatment:

**Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. The ones listed below are particularly relevant to your treatment plan:**

**During treatment:**

- **Infection:** The number of white blood cells that help fight infections will be lowered by the chemotherapy drugs, usually starting after about day 7 of each of the first 8 cycles. Your blood count is expected to return to normal by day 1 of the next cycle, and will be normal after the 4 months of chemotherapy drugs. If your white blood cell count becomes very low you could get a serious infection. **If you have a fever over 38°C or 100°F, call your cancer doctor immediately (24 hours a day) or go immediately to your nearest Hospital Emergency and tell the doctor you are on chemotherapy.**
- **Increased risk of bleeding:** The number of platelets (special blood cells that help your blood to clot normally after injury) may be lowered by the treatment. They are expected to return to normal by day 1 of next cycle. When the platelet count is low you may be more likely to bruise or bleed. Notify your cancer doctor promptly if you develop large or numerous bruises, or unusual bleeding (e.g. nosebleed that won't stop, blood in stool, urine, or sputum). Try to avoid using ASA or ibuprofen, if other pain medications could be used. Talk to your doctor if you feel you need to use one of these medications while on chemotherapy. For patients receiving Warfarin, a modification of the dose may be required based on blood test results (increased INR due to possible interaction with chemotherapy or Trastuzumab).
- **Tissue or vein injury:** Vinorelbine can cause tissue injury if they leak out of the vein while being given. Report any sensation of burning or pain to your nurse immediately. Chemotherapy may cause some inflammation and/or scarring in the veins, which may make it difficult to start an IV. Your nurse will help your doctor assess whether a special intravenous device (PICC line or portacath) needs to be considered for your therapy. Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed in your vein. If so, apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
- **“Ileus” (temporary halt in bowel function) :** Vinorelbine may cause constipation, which can rarely be so serious as to stop bowel activity altogether for a few days. This could cause constipation, abdominal discomfort, and even vomiting. If you are unable to move your bowels and keep fluids down, you may need to be treated in hospital briefly, until this effect wears off. Contact your cancer doctor if you develop these problems.

**During or after treatment:**

- **Neuropathy:** Vinorelbine can cause you to develop damage to the peripheral nerve endings (the nerves to the hands and feet, and rarely, the face). This can result in feelings of numbness and tingling, or sometimes painful burning sensations. You will need to be careful when handling things that are sharp, hot, or very cold. The majority of the time, these feelings develop after a number of treatments, are not severe, and will resolve fully over a period of months once treatment stops. Infrequently (<5%), these feelings might occur early, might be severe, or might not entirely resolve.

**Common chemotherapy side effects and management:**

SIDE EFFECT	MANAGEMENT
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<p><b>Nausea and vomiting</b> can occur and, if so, you will need to take anti-nausea drugs at the time of the injections. You will not usually need anti-nausea drugs for vinorelbine.</p>	<p>If you have nausea, you will be given a prescription for anti-nausea drugs to take before your chemo treatment and afterwards at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</li> <li>• Refer to the following pamphlets: <i>For the Patient: Managing Nausea; Chemotherapy &amp; You; Food choices to help control nausea*</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed within 1-2 days after treatment. This may extend all the way up the arm. Sometimes pain may occur where the cancer is located.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</li> <li>• For minor pain, take acetaminophen (eg, TYLENOL®). Take ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) for mild to moderate pain.</li> <li>• See your doctor if the pain continues to bother you.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fatigue</b> is common especially as the number of chemotherapy treatments increases it may get worse or last longer.</p> <p><b>Mouth sores</b> may occur a few days after chemotherapy treatment and may last days or weeks. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, gums, and the sides of the mouth or in the throat.</p> <p><b>Hair thinning or loss sometimes occurs</b> with Vinorelbine. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with Vinorelbine. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your energy level will improve with time after treatment is completed.</li> <li>• You may obtain a suggestion pamphlet for handling fatigue from nursing staff in your facility</li> <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>• Try baking soda mouth rinses (using 1/4 tsp baking soda in 1 cup warm water) and rinse several times a day. Try ideas in <i>Easy to chew, easy to swallow food ideas*</i>.</li> <li>• Tell your doctor about a sore mouth, as your chemotherapy doses may need to be decreased if mouth sores are severe. Call your doctor if you are having difficulty eating or drinking due to pain.</li> <li>• Use a gentle shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>• Care should be taken with use of hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Constipation or Diarrhea</b> may occur between treatments.</p>	<p>To help constipation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise if you can.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids (8 cups a day).</li> <li>• Discuss with your cancer doctor or nurse whether you need to consider a laxative.</li> </ul> <p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids.</li> <li>• Eat and drink often in small amounts.</li> <li>• Avoid high fiber foods as outlined in <i>Food ideas to help with diarrhea during chemotherapy</i></li> </ul>

\*available through your nurse or nutritionist

\*\* available through your nurse

**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 \_\_\_\_\_