






 瑪麗醫院 QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL	<b>Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology</b>	<b>Document No</b>	OGGO-0510-03-06-E-(I)
		<b>Issue Date</b>	Jul 2016
	<b>Subject</b> Side effects and Nursing tips of the chemotherapy - Gemcitabine	<b>Review Date</b>	Jul 2019
		<b>Approved by</b>	Gynae-Oncology Team, QMH
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## Gemcitabine

Common side effects	Caring tips
Bone marrow suppression especially low haemoglobin level	Symptoms of anaemia include shortness of breath, dizziness and palpitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red blood cell transfusion or supplement with red blood cell-growth factor</li> <li>• Maintain balanced diet and adequate nutrition</li> </ul>
Mild nausea & Vomiting  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chemotherapy inhibits growth of cancer cells but may affect gastric and brain cells causing nausea &amp; vomiting. This side effect will subside when chemotherapy stops</li> <li>• Doctor will prescribe adequate anti-emetics before chemotherapy</li> <li>• Take anti-emetic half hour before meal can alleviate vomiting</li> <li>• Diet advice               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small &amp; frequent meals can decrease gastric-full symptoms</li> <li>○ Don't take large amount of fluid during or after meal to avoid gastric-full symptoms. Better to take fluid between meals</li> <li>○ Avoid oily, too hot or too cold foods</li> <li>○ Eat &amp; chew slowly</li> <li>○ Take a rest after meal but avoid lying down immediately after meal. Better to stand up or walk</li> <li>○ Avoid non-delicious food</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other methods such as relaxation exercise, hypnosis &amp; acupuncture have certain effect on precipitating vomiting</li> <li>• In severe vomiting, intravenous fluid and electrolyte will be infused to maintain body fluid balance</li> </ul>
Fever  	Apply adequate care. Doctor may prescribe anti-pyretic if necessary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform your nurse &amp; doctor if you have fever (<math>&gt;100.4^{\circ}\text{F}</math> / <math>&gt; 38^{\circ}\text{C}</math>), malaise or any signs of infection</li> </ul>
Flu-like symptoms: e.g. headache, weakness, chills, muscle pain, anorexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take adequate rest and avoid overload</li> <li>• Apply adequate care, take doctor prescribed pain-killer if necessary</li> <li>• Small frequent meal, maintain balanced diet, avoid non-delicious, spicy and oily food</li> </ul>
Rash	Chemo-agent may affect epidermal tissue and cause discomfort like dryness and desquamation, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply appropriate lubricant cream</li> <li>• Avoid sun burn</li> <li>• Take drug for itchiness prescribed by doctor if necessary</li> </ul>
Oedema	Doctor will prescribe medication to control oedema

Remarks : Different patient will have different side effects toward chemotherapy. The response should only be compared with that after previous chemotherapy for each individual. Please inform doctor for this condition on follow-up.

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Rare side effects	Caring tips
Hair Loss  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hair loss caused by chemotherapy will grow up again. Usually, hair will grow 2 to 3 months after chemotherapy completed</li> <li>• Tips for alleviate anxiety caused by hair loss               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buy hair-wig or cap before early stage of hair loss</li> <li>○ Understand the reason and level of hair loss</li> <li>○ express the feelings towards hair loss</li> <li>○ Know that hair will grow again and the color and quality may have some change (e.g. hair will become curl or grey)</li> <li>○ Avoid using hair-dryer, hair-curler and perm hair which will cause hair loss</li> <li>○ Use cap and sun-block to protect your head from sunshine</li> <li>○ Keep hair scalp clean after hair completely lost</li> <li>○ Cut hair before chemotherapy or use hair-wig, cap or scarf</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Mucosal pain & ulcer  	Ulcer or white patches will affect appetite and cause difficulty in swallowing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine your oral-cavity daily</li> <li>• Use soft toothbrush</li> <li>• Maintain oral hygiene: oral gargling daily, use drug-gargle prescribed by doctor if there is oral ulcer</li> <li>• Dietary advice, avoid irritation to the oral-cavity               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Avoid too hot and cold food</li> <li>○ Increase water intake and food rich in water (e.g. ice-cream and fruits, etc.)</li> <li>○ Cut food into pieces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Diarrhea  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink large amount of water</li> <li>• Take more food rich in potassium (e.g. Banana, orange, potato, pears and almond juice, etc.)</li> <li>• Avoid alcoholic or beverage with caffeine (e.g. tea, coffee and candies)</li> <li>• Take anti-diarrheas prescribed by doctor</li> </ul>
Limbs parenthesis and numbness  	Doctor may consider prescribe vitamin B6 to alleviate the side effects if condition is severe
Mild proteinuria & haematuria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink large amount of water</li> <li>• Follow up on observation of urine color</li> </ul>
Slightly affect liver function	Chemotherapy will only be proceeded when the liver function before chemotherapy is normal