

Bendamustine

Treatment Guide

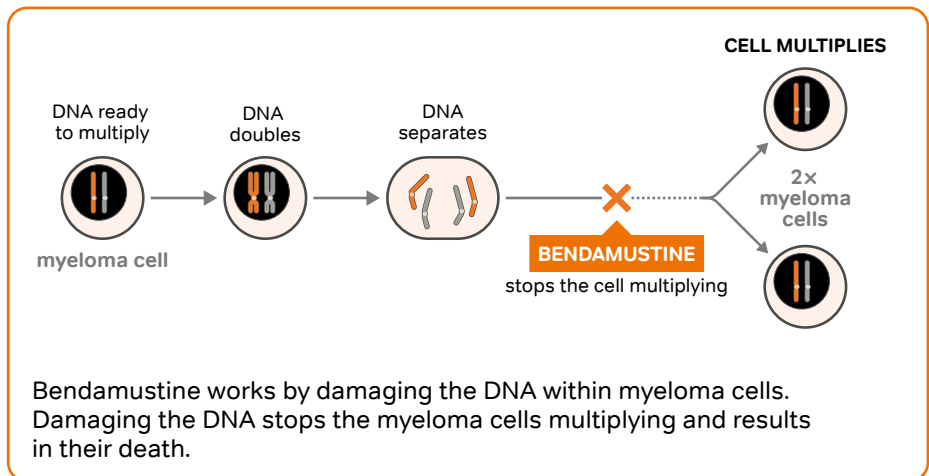
What is bendamustine?

Bendamustine is a chemotherapy treatment used for myeloma. It belongs to a class of chemotherapy drugs called alkylating agents.

How does it work?

DNA is the genetic makeup of cells. It carries the instructions for cells and how they function.

Bendamustine works by damaging the DNA within myeloma cells. Damaging the DNA stops the myeloma cells multiplying and results in their death.



How is bendamustine given?



Bendamustine can be given into a vein (intravenously).



Bendamustine is often given in combination with other myeloma treatments.



Bendamustine is usually given on day 1 and 2 of every 4 week treatment cycle. You normally have at least 3 cycles of treatment. Individual treatment plans vary. Your healthcare team will discuss your specific plan with you.

Possible side effects

Bendamustine has a number of possible side effects which can vary from patient to patient. You will experience some side effects, but it is unlikely you will experience them all. Most side effects will ease once treatment has finished. Always report any side effects to your healthcare team as soon as possible so they can be treated quickly.

The side effects listed here are those experienced most often. For a complete list of side effects please refer to the patient information leaflet which is included in the pack with the treatment. If you do not have this, ask your healthcare team for it.



Myeloma UK provides a wide range of information booklets about side effects and their management. Relevant booklets are signposted beneath each side effect on the following pages.

You can find these along with all of our information booklets online at myeloma.org.uk/library.

You can also find out more about the management of these side effects by asking your healthcare team or by contacting Myeloma UK.



0800 980 3332



AskTheNurse@myeloma.org.uk



myeloma.org.uk



Anaemia and bleeding

Bendamustine can decrease the number of red blood cells, called anaemia. Symptoms include: looking pale, shortness of breath, and fatigue. Bendamustine can also decrease the number of platelets, increasing your risk of bleeding or bruising. You may be given treatment for these side effects and to boost your blood cell counts.



For more information see the **Fatigue and myeloma Infoguide** and the **Bleeding and bruising Infosheet** from Myeloma UK.



Sore mouth and throat

Bendamustine can cause pain and inflammation of the mouth and throat, called mucositis. This can make eating and drinking difficult. You may need intravenous fluids and nutritional supplements until you are able to eat and drink normally. You may also be offered mouthwashes and painkillers to ease any pain.



For more information see the **Mouthcare Infosheet** from Myeloma UK.



Risk of infection

Bendamustine may reduce the number of white blood cells, increasing your risk of infection. Common signs include: high or low temperature (37.5°C or above, or below 36°C), feeling shivery or cold, peeing (passing urine) more often or pain when peeing, and cough or cold symptoms.



Infections can become serious if not treated quickly. Contact your healthcare team or out of hours service immediately if you think you have an infection.



For more information see the **Infection and myeloma Infosheet** from Myeloma UK.



Effects on fertility

Bendamustine may affect your fertility and ability to have a child. Talk to your healthcare team about how this may affect you and what your options are. Bendamustine may also bring on an early menopause.



For more information see the **Infopack for living well with myeloma** from Myeloma UK.



Fatigue

Fatigue is a feeling of extreme tiredness that is not relieved by sleep. It usually resolves after treatment has finished. Your treatment, any side effects, and your mental health can all impact fatigue. Treating any medical causes such as anaemia, can help to manage fatigue. Allowing time for rest, gentle exercise, and complementary therapies such as massage may also help.



For more information see the **Fatigue and myeloma Infoguide** from Myeloma UK.



Nausea and vomiting

Bendamustine may cause nausea or vomiting. You may be given anti-sickness (antiemetic) medicine to prevent or reduce nausea and vomiting. You must take them as prescribed rather than waiting until you feel sick. There are several types of anti-sickness and if the one you have is not effective, ask to try another.



For more information see the **Nausea and vomiting Infosheet** from Myeloma UK.



Hair thinning or loss

Thinning or loss of your hair usually starts within 2 to 4 weeks of your first dose of bendamustine. You may also have thinning or loss of eyelashes, eyebrows, and other body hair. Hair loss is nearly always temporary and your hair should start to grow back around a month after finishing treatment. Try to avoid hair dyes and use a mild shampoo to avoid scalp irritation.



For more information see the **Infopack for living well with myeloma** from Myeloma UK.



Heart problems

Bendamustine can cause heart problems and changes to the way your heart beats. Report any more noticeable heartbeats or changes in your heartbeat to your healthcare team.

It can also cause high or low blood pressure, so report any headaches, blurred vision, or dizziness to your healthcare team.



Call 999 if you experience severe chest pain or tightness.



Headaches

Bendamustine can cause headaches. Try to drink plenty of fluids and speak to your healthcare team about suitable painkillers.

Important information about bendamustine



You must not take bendamustine during pregnancy, as it is expected to be harmful to the baby. You must use effective contraception while on this treatment, and for at least 6 months after treatment has finished, if you or your partner could become pregnant.



You should not breastfeed when taking bendamustine as it is not known if it can pass to the milk.



Supplements or herbal medicines that have not been prescribed by your haematologist may cause harm when taken alongside your prescribed treatment.

You must speak to your healthcare team before taking any kind of supplement or alternative treatment, including herbal, traditional, or natural medicines and remedies, and vitamins or wellbeing supplements, to ensure it is safe to do so.



If you have any questions about your treatment, speak to your healthcare team. They are the best people to ask if you have questions about your individual situation. The information in this publication is not meant to replace their advice.



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We're here for everything a diagnosis of myeloma brings

Get in touch to find out more about how we can support you

Call the Myeloma Infoline on



0800 980 3332

Email Ask the Nurse at

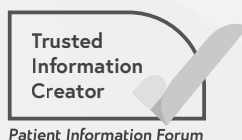


AskTheNurse@myeloma.org.uk

Visit our website at



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Please fill in a short online survey about our patient information
at **myeloma.org.uk/pifedback** or email any comments to
patientinfo@myeloma.org.uk



For more about how we produce our information, visit
myeloma.org.uk/about-our-information