

**Side Effects****What You Should Do****Prevention****Less Common:**

- Stiff neck
- Headache (usually for a short time only)
- Fever

- Contact your doctor or nurse if this continues for more than one day after the injection, or if it bothers you.

- Pain or tenderness where the needle was placed

- Apply warm compress to the area for 15 or 20 minutes several times a day until discomfort ends.

- Sores in the mouth or the lips

- Contact your doctor or nurse as soon as you notice sores on mouth or lips.

- Maintain good mouth hygiene. Use a soft toothbrush. Avoid hot, spicy or acidic foods.

**Rare:**

- Signs of infection/ fever, chills, cough
- Low white blood cells

- Keep a thermometer at home. Recognize the signs of infection.
- If your temperature is over 38°C or 100°F, go directly to the local Emergency Department. You may have an infection and need antibiotics.

- Limit contact with people who are sick or have colds. Rest often. Wash your hands often.

- Nausea and vomiting

- If vomiting is severe, contact your doctor or nurse right away.

- Your doctor can order medicine for nausea and vomiting. Continue drinking clear fluids. Get fresh air and rest.

**Very Rare:**

- Blurred vision
- Confusion, convulsions, dizziness
- Unusual tiredness or weakness
- Numbness in fingers or toes

- Contact your doctor IMMEDIATELY!

## Precautions:

- It is important to tell your doctor if you have chickenpox (or have recently been exposed to someone who has had chickenpox), shingles, or any other infection at the time of your injection. Any of these conditions could affect therapy with this medication.
- Due to the risk of infection, check with your doctor before any vaccinations.
- If a doctor has advised you to take ASA (Aspirin®) to prevent heart disease or stroke, tell your cancer doctor about this before you start cancer treatment. Otherwise, DO NOT take ASA for daily aches and pains during chemotherapy treatment; use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) products instead. (Check with your doctor or pharmacist if a product contains ASA or acetaminophen.)

This information sheet does not contain all known information about this drug

For more information on this medication, please call your doctor, pharmacist or nurse

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(Phone Number for your Doctor or Nurse)

Or call the Canadian Cancer Society's  
Cancer Information Service at  
**1-888-939-3333**  
or at  
**www.cancer.ca**

Collaborative Project of:  
Systemic Therapy Program, Cancer Care Nova Scotia  
New Brunswick Cancer Network, Division of New Brunswick Dept.  
of Health

Approved by the Nova Scotia Cancer Patient Education Committee  
Visit our Web site at: [www.cancercare.ns.ca](http://www.cancercare.ns.ca)

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(1-866-599-2236)

## MEDICATION INFO SHEET

# CYTARABINE Intrathecal (sigh- TAR-a-been in-tra-thee-call)

### Other names for this medication:

Cytosar® (Brand Name)      Other generic products available

### Appearance:

Injection: Clear solution for injection into the spinal column.

### Why this medication is used:

Cytarabine intrathecal is used to prevent cancer cells from growing into larger tumours inside the skull or spinal column. This medication is used with other medications for the treatment of some types of leukemia.

### How do you take this medication:

Injection: Cytarabine intrathecal is injected by your doctor. This type of injection is called a lumbar puncture or spinal tap.