

# Cytarabine INTRATHECAL

## INDICATION

CNS prophylaxis and treatment for patients with lymphoma.  
Note: A liposomal preparation and separate protocol is available.

**ALL INTRATHECAL DRUGS TO BE ADMINISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND LOCAL POLICY**

## TREATMENT INTENT

Curative or disease modification depending on context.

## PRE-ASSESSMENT

- Blood tests - FBC, coagulation screen.
- Stop/withhold anticoagulation.
- If platelets  $<40 \times 10^9/L$  give 1-2 pools of platelets (depending on prior platelet increments) just before/during procedure. Correct any coagulation abnormality.
- Need for CNS prophylaxis or treatment should have been agreed in MDT.

## DRUG REGIMEN

**Day 1**    **CYTARABINE** 70 mg INTRATHECAL.  
*Allow drug to reach room temperature before administering.*

## CYCLE FREQUENCY

Dependent on concurrent chemotherapy regimen.

## RESTAGING

For CNS treatment, continue at least weekly until CSF clear.

## DOSE MODIFICATIONS

Schedule may need modification if the platelet count is very low or coagulation is abnormal.  
Renal/Hepatic impairment: no dose adjustment needed for intrathecal administration of a low-dose.

**This is a controlled document and therefore must not be changed or photocopied**      **1 of 2**

L.55 Intrathecal CYTARABINE	Authorised by Lymphoma lead Dr. Graham Collins Date: May 2018	Published: September 2008 Reviewed: July 2021 Review: May 2023	Version 3.7
-----------------------------------	---	--	----------------

---

## INVESTIGATIONS

FBC – aim for platelet count of > 40 x 10<sup>9</sup>/L.

---

## CONCURRENT MEDICATION

See individual treatment protocol.

---

## EMETIC RISK

Minimal.

---

## ADVERSE EFFECTS

- Arachnoiditis; headache, back pain, neck stiffness and fever, rarely leucoencephalopathy.
  - Care should be taken if radiotherapy is given during or after intrathecal cytarabine therapy as it can exacerbate toxicity.
- 

## TREATMENT RELATED MORTALITY

<1%

---

## REFERENCES

1. Department of Health (2008) Updated national guidance on the safe administration of intrathecal chemotherapy, Health Service Circular, HSC 2008/001.
2. National Patient Safety Agency (2008) Using vinca alkaloid minibags (Adult/Adolescent units) Rapid response report NPSA/2008/RRR004.
3. British Committee for Standards in Haematology- Guidelines for the use of platelet transfusions. B J Haematol 2017. 176:365-394.
4. The Lancet Oncology. Dose recommendations for anticancer drugs in patients with renal or hepatic impairment. Lancet Oncol 2019; 20:e201-08.

### Review

Name	Revision	Date	Version	Review date
Sara Castro (Advanced Haematology Pharmacist)	Annual Protocol review	May 2021	3.7	May 2023

---

**This is a controlled document and therefore must not be changed or photocopied**

**2 of 2**

L.55 Intrathecal CYTARABINE	Authorised by Lymphoma lead Dr. Graham Collins Date: May 2018	Published: September 2008 Reviewed: July 2021 Review: May 2023	Version 3.7
-----------------------------------	---	--	----------------