Vincristine

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Brand name: Oncovin®
Brand name: Vincasar PFS®
Brand name: Vincrex®
FDA approval: Yes
Manufacturer Link
Usage:

Vincristine is administered intravenously and is used to treat many different types of cancer. It is frequently used in combination with other drugs. Malignancies in which vincristine is used include acute leukemia, rhabdoyosarcoma, neuroblastoma, Hodgkin's disease and other lymphomas, lymphorecticular neoplasms, childhood leukemias.1

- 1Chu, E., & DeVita, V. T. (2015). Physicians' cancerchemotherapy drug manual 2015. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Mechanism:

Vincristine's (Oncovin®, Vincasar PFS®, Vincrex®) anti-cancer properties result from its ability to inhibit cell division during early mitosis. It achieves this through a process that disrupts formation of microtubules, which effects cell division and eventually leads to apoptosis. Vincristine may also have the ability to inhibit theprotein synthesis of DNA and RNA.1

- 1Chu, E., & DeVita, V. T. (2015). Physicians' cancerchemotherapy drug manual 2015. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Side effects:

Unlike some of the other vinca alkaloids, vincristine does not cause severe bone marrow suppression (decreased blood cell counts). Common side effects include hair loss, pain/redness at location of injection, nausea/stomach pain/vomiting, lowered blood cell count, numbness, headache, constipation, nervous system problems such as neuropathy or sensory impairment, blurred or double vision, back pain, overall weakness. This drug should not be taken by a patient who is pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or breast-feeding as it may cause birth defects. Patients should not receive any immunizations (vaccinations) while taking this medication. Vincristine may cause immunosuppression (weakened immunity) and vaccinations could lead to an illness. Patients should notify their clinician about any prescription drugs taken concurrently with the chemotherapy and any other medical conditions, such as, chickenpox, herpes zoster infection, gout, kidney stones, infections, liver disease, nerve or muscle disease. 1

- 1Vincasar PFS.. Prescribing Information. Pharmacia & Upjohn Company. Juky, 2013. [http://labeling.pfizer.com/ShowLabeling.aspx?id=4653]