

# Eloxatin<sup>®</sup>

*Oxaliplatin concentrated solution for injection*

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## CONSUMER MEDICINE INFORMATION

Please read this leaflet before you are given this medicine.

### What is in this leaflet?

This leaflet answers some common questions about Eloxatin injection.

It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have benefits and risks. Your doctor has weighed the risks of using this medicine against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

**If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

**Keep this leaflet with this medicine.**

You may need to read it again.

### What Eloxatin is used for

Eloxatin is used to treat cancer of the large intestine and rectum (colorectal cancer). Eloxatin is used with two other anti-cancer drugs, fluorouracil (FU), and folinic acid. The active ingredient in Eloxatin is called oxaliplatin.

Cancer cells are normal cells which have changed so that they grow in an uncontrolled way. Oxaliplatin works by interfering with cancer cell growth. Because of the similarities between cancer cells and normal cells, anti cancer drugs often have unwanted effects on the body.

Your doctors have decided to treat you with Eloxatin because they believe that the benefit of Eloxatin treatment will be greater than the unwanted effects.

Many of the side effects from anti cancer drugs are predictable and can be prevented or lessened. Your doctor and other staff will take all of the precautions needed to reduce the unwanted effects of treatment.

Your doctor may have prescribed this medicine for another reason.

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.**

This medicine is only available with a doctor's prescription.

### Before you are given it

*When you must not be given it*

**You should not be given Eloxatin if you are allergic to the active ingredient oxaliplatin.**

If you have had an allergic reaction to oxaliplatin before, you should not receive it again.

**You must not be given Eloxatin if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.**

Oxaliplatin may cause birth defects if you are being treated with it at the time of conception or it is given to women who are already pregnant. Adequate

contraception is required during treatment with oxaliplatin. You should discuss this with your doctor. Nursing mothers are advised not to breastfeed while receiving oxaliplatin, as the effect of breast milk from such patients is unknown.

**You must not be given it if you have severe kidney disease.**

**Do not use it after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the vial.**

If you are given this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well.

*Before you start are given it*

**You must tell your doctor if:**

- You have had a reaction to any other platinum compound,
- You have severe kidney disease,
- You have nerve damage (neuropathy),
- you have any other medical condition that he or she is not aware of.

*Taking other medicines*

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food store.**

Some medicines and Eloxatin may interfere with each other.

Your doctor or pharmacist can tell you what to do if you are taking any of these medicines.

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## How Eloxatin is given

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Eloxatin will be given to you as an infusion into one of your veins (this is called an intravenous infusion). The infusion will be given over 2 - 6 hours.

The dose of Eloxatin is calculated according to your body surface area, which is calculated from your weight and height. The usual dose is 85mg/m<sup>2</sup> every two weeks or 130mg/m<sup>2</sup> every three weeks. Your doctor may change the dose in some circumstances.

Each course of treatment is called a cycle; your doctor will tell you how many cycles you will receive.

Eloxatin will be used with fluorouracil (FU) and folinic acid.

**Eloxatin is not recommended in children.**

*If you receive too much (overdose)*

Your doctor will decide what dose of Eloxatin you need, and this will be given under close supervision, usually in a hospital setting. The risk of an overdose in these circumstances is low. In the event of an overdose occurring, your doctor will decide on the treatment necessary.

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## While you are being given Eloxatin

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*Things you must do:*

**Avoid cold foods and drinks and cover skin prior to exposure to cold during or within 48 hours following being given oxaliplatin, since neurological effects may be brought on or worsened by exposure to cold.**

**Contact your doctor immediately if you develop fever, particularly in**

**association with persistent diarrhoea or evidence of infection since this may indicate low blood count.**

**Contact your doctor if persistent vomiting, diarrhoea, signs of dehydration, cough or breathing difficulties or signs of allergic reaction occur.**

**Visual disturbance is a rare side effect of Eloxatin. Contact your doctor if this happens to you, and do not drive or use machinery until your vision is clear.**

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## Side Effects

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**Tell your doctor or nurse as soon as possible if you do not feel well while Eloxatin is being given to you.**

**You should also tell your doctor if you do not feel well between courses of Eloxatin.**

All medicines can have side effects. It is important to understand the side effects that Eloxatin may cause, even though you may not experience them. As well as the predictable side effects of Eloxatin, there are other effects that occur much more rarely. If you have any side effects or notice anything unusual it is important to inform your doctor before your next treatment. Your doctor will decide whether such effects are because of your treatment, and what action needs to be taken.

This section explains the side effects of Eloxatin, and some of the checks made before each treatment to prevent excessive side effects.

- *Physical Condition.* Before each treatment with Eloxatin you will be examined for any condition that may be affected by chemotherapy (for example, infection, or

loss of feeling). This will include those conditions caused by previous treatment, those caused by your disease, and those caused by other things.

- *Loss of feeling.* Eloxatin can affect nerves in the hands and feet. This is common soon after treatment and can appear as tingling or numbness in the fingers or toes, and may be made worse by cold temperatures or by contact with cold water or other cold objects. These symptoms often go away between treatments, but may last longer and get worse with repeated treatment. In some patients the limbs may become weak or painful. However, in most patients these symptoms improve after treatment is stopped. Tell your doctor if any of these things happen. Your doctor will examine you before treatment to see if you are affected.
- *Nausea and Vomiting.* Severe nausea and vomiting is uncommon with Eloxatin. Mild nausea and vomiting is more common. Medication to prevent the sickness caused by Eloxatin will be given before treatment, and may sometimes be continued after treatment.
- *Diarrhoea.* Severe diarrhoea may occur during treatment with Eloxatin.

**If you suffer from persistent or severe diarrhoea or vomiting, contact your doctor urgently for treatment advice.**

- *Low Blood Counts.* Eloxatin can affect the body's ability to make blood cells. There are three types of blood cells checked before each treatment; platelets, which help control bleeding; white blood cells, which help fight infection; and red blood cells which move oxygen around the body. If your

blood count is too low, your treatment may be postponed, or the dose reduced.

**Tell your doctor if you notice any bruising or abnormal bleeding, or have an infection. These may be signs of a low blood count.**

- *Difficulty swallowing.* Some patients may experience a sudden, temporary feeling of difficulty with swallowing or breathing. This sensation, if it occurs, usually happens during the infusion or within hours after the infusion. It may be triggered by swallowing a cold drink. Although unpleasant, this feeling does not last long, and goes away by itself.

**Tell your doctor if this happens to you.**

Other known side effects of Eloxatin are;

- mucositis (sore lips or mouth ulcers)
- abdominal pain
- constipation
- anorexia
- changes to liver function
- mild hair loss (alopecia)
- fever
- inflammation around the injection site
- tiredness
- skin rash
- allergic reactions
- conjunctivitis
- altered taste
- abnormal tongue sensation
- nose bleeds
- feeling of chest pressure
- voice disturbance (rare)
- loss of hearing (rare)
- lung disorders (rare)
- visual disturbance (rare)

**Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some patients. Tell your doctor if you**

**notice anything else that is making you feel unwell.**

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## After being given Eloxatin

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### *Storage*

If you need to store Eloxatin before you take it with you to hospital, make sure it is stored in a cool dry place where the temperature does not exceed 30°C. Do not freeze.

**Do not use it after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the vial.**

This is not all the information that is available on Eloxatin. If you have any more questions or are not sure about anything ask your doctor or pharmacist.

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## Product Description

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### *What it looks like*

Eloxatin comes as a concentrated solution in a glass vial.

A box contains 1 vial.

### *Ingredients*

Each Eloxatin vial contains the active ingredient, oxaliplatin 50 mg or 100 mg.

Beside the active ingredient - Eloxatin concentrated solution for injection contains water for injections.

### *Manufacturer*

Eloxatin is supplied in New Zealand by:

sanofi-aventis new zealand  
limited  
Level 8, James and Wells Tower  
56 Cawley Street

Ellerslie  
Auckland  
New Zealand

This leaflet was updated in July 2008.

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