

Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (ALL) treatment: AL-4 continuation cycles with dose escalation

This part of treatment is called: continuation cycles with dose escalation phase. This means that the dose of **Methotrexate and 6-MP** increases with each cycle to a maximum amount.

Your oncologist will decide on the dose of these drugs based on several factors including: how much of the drug you have already received, heart function, blood tests and overall health.

The treatment is 24 cycles. Each cycle is 21 days. Day 21 is day 1 of the next cycle. Please see the last page for a 21 day cycle.

Antibiotic medication

During continuation cycles and for 6 months after completion you will need to take antibiotics. You will either take:

- Dapsone 100 mg pill everyday

OR

- Septra DS pills - once a day on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Septra DS is not taken on Methotrexate days.

Drug	How drug is given	Day drug is given
Vincristine	Intravenous - IV	1
Methotrexate	Intravenous - IV	1, 8, 15
Dexamethasone	pills	1 to 5
6-MP	pills	1 to 14

For patients receiving CNS (Central Nervous System) therapy

- Intrathecal (IT) is when the drug is given into the spinal fluid (lower back). IT Methotrexate is given 18 weeks from the start of CNS therapy, then repeated every 18 weeks throughout Intensification and Continuation cycles. IT methotrexate is not given if you have mouth sores (mucositis). Date due _____.
- The IV methotrexate is **not** given on the day you receive IT methotrexate.

Possible side effects

- Nausea and vomiting.
Take anti-nausea medications as directed
- Hair loss within 21 days
- Dexamethasone (steroid) side effects, such as mood swings, irritability and difficulties with sleeping
- Low blood counts which lead to infection, fatigue and bleeding
- Constipation
- Numbness and tingling in fingers and toes
- Mouth sores (mucositis)

Chemotherapy – What you need to know

There will be a decrease in your blood cells. These include white blood cells, red blood cells, hemoglobin and platelets.

- **Call if any side effects seem unexpected or extreme.**

Contact information

Health Care Team:

- Doctor: _____
- Phone: _____
- Pharmacy: _____
- Phone: _____ Fax: _____

You will need a digital thermometer.
You can buy one at most drug stores.



If you have any of these signs of an infection call your health care team right away:



- A temperature of 38°C (100°F) or more. This is a fever. **Do not take Tylenol, Aspirin, ibuprofen or anti-inflammatory medications without checking with your team first.** They may cause bleeding or may hide a fever. Call if you need medication for pain.
- A cough productive of coloured phlegm or sputum.
- Red inflamed skin.
- Diarrhea that does not go away.
- Increased shortness of breath.
- Pain or burning with urination.
- Sore throat.
- Watch for signs of shingles: pain, blisters or a skin rash that may look like chicken pox.

What to watch for:

- Unusual bleeding. Call us right away.
- Constipation. Use your laxatives as needed. Do not use a suppository or enema.
- Numbness and tingling in your fingers and toes.
- Increased thirst, voiding (peeing) more often, or an increase in blood sugar.
- Increased swelling of the feet, legs, arms and hands. Voiding less.

We encourage you to:

- Attend the chemotherapy class (if available) and read the chemotherapy book.
- Eat and drink well (at least 2 liters of non-caffeinated beverages a day).
- Practice good hygiene.
- Practice good mouth care.
- Avoid alcohol while taking Dexamethasone.
- Take Dexamethasone with food.

Possible severe or long term side effects

- Bone thinning/weakening.

Birth control

- If you are of child bearing age, we advise that you use birth control.

Total number of cycles

- Bone Density testing at end of maintenance
- MRI scan – hips and knees

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21/1	
Vincristine	✓																					✓
Methotrexate	✓							✓							✓							✓
Dexamethasone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																	✓
6-MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓
Septa DS OR																						
Dapsone if Sulpha allergy																						