



The University of Georgia  
College of Veterinary Medicine  
Oncology Service  
(706) 542-3221

**Client Information: CCNU (Lomustine)**

Today your pet was treated with or sent home with CCNU (brand name Lomustine). This is a chemotherapeutic agent. Please follow the instructions below.

**Administration**

If the CCNU was sent home with you, please administer all of the capsules at the time specified by your veterinarian (usually in the morning). This drug can be given in a food meatball.

**Note: Pregnant or nursing women, people actively trying to conceive, and children should not administer this drug. When handling CCNU, wear the blue chemotherapy gloves we have provided. Wash hands after administration. Do not open the capsules. Place used gloves, unused medication, and empty containers in a ziplock bag and return to the hospital for disposal.**

**Special Instructions for Care**

**For dogs:** CCNU will be excreted in the urine and feces. Avoid contact with your dog's urine and feces for 48 hours after treatment. The drug is unstable in the environment, but we do recommend that you encourage your dog to urinate and defecate in low-traffic areas of your yard for the 48 hours after treatment. If your dog urinates or defecates in your home, wear gloves when disposing of stool and urine. To clean the area, wear gloves and wash with soap and water.

**For cats:** CCNU will be excreted in the urine and feces. Avoid contact with your cat's urine and feces for 48 hours after treatment. Wear gloves when cleaning the litter box. You can use flushable litter and flush urine clumps and stool down the toilet or use scoopable litter and place waste in a plastic bag and throw in the garbage. Change all of the litter in the box 48 hours after treatment and wash with soap and water.

**Note: Pregnant or nursing women, people actively trying to conceive, and children should not clean the litter box or urine/feces in the house for 48 hours after CCNU is administered.**

**Potential Side Effects**

**Most patients do not experience side effects with this drug, but potential side effects can occur. It is important that you are able to recognize side effects. These side effects will generally resolve with appropriate treatment.**

**1. Myelosuppression (low white blood cell count)**

This toxicity is common following CCNU therapy. It usually occurs 7-14 days after treatment and generally does not cause any abnormal signs. If the white blood cell count falls too low, your pet is more susceptible to infection. Usually these infections originate from normal bacteria in the gi tract. Infections will cause fever and make your pet feel sick. Please monitor your pet for lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite. If noted, please call us. You may take your

dog's temperature rectally at home. A digital thermometer is easiest to use. Cats will usually not tolerate this. If the temperature is 103 degrees or higher, please call us. If signs of an infection are noted, we will recommend that you bring your pet to the hospital for examination and treatment.

## **2. Gastrointestinal Side Effects**

This toxicity is rarely seen with CCNU. Please monitor your pet for vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, or loss of appetite.

For **vomiting**, if your pet vomits once or twice, withhold food and water for 12 hours. After 12 hours offer water and if your pet is able to drink without vomiting, offer food. If your pet vomits more than twice, vomits with eating, or is lethargic and vomiting call us.

For **loss of appetite**, try feeding boiled chicken and rice for dogs and fishy canned foods for cats. If your pet does not eat for 24 hours or is lethargic and inappetent, please call us.

For **diarrhea**, if stools are soft, feed bland food (boiled chicken and rice) for dogs. If the diarrhea is bloody, watery, persists for more than 24 hours, or if your pet is lethargic and has diarrhea, please call us.

If your pet is **lethargic** and has gastrointestinal signs, please call us. This could mean dehydration or infection and we will most likely have you bring your pet to the hospital for examination and treatment.

## **3. Low platelet count**

Platelets are the clotting cells in the blood. Following treatment with CCNU, numbers of these cells may be low at the time the white blood cell count is low. They will then return to normal within a few days. This toxicity can also be seen as a more permanent toxicity after a patient has received multiple treatments with CCNU and is due to bone marrow damage. We will monitor your pet's bloodcount and if the platelet count is low when your pet is due for therapy, the drug will be discontinued. Generally, the platelet count will not fall low enough to result in bleeding and with discontinuation of CCNU, the platelet count will stabilize.

## **4. Liver toxicity**

This toxicity has been reported in a small percentage of dogs treated with CCNU, usually after multiple doses. We will monitor liver enzymes (bloodwork) while your pet is being treated with CCNU. If toxicity is suspected, the drug will be discontinued. Signs of liver toxicity are lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, jaundice (yellow color of skin, gums, and whites of eyes), and fluid accumulation in the abdomen.

**Note: If your pet is showing any of the signs described above or if you have any concerns about your pet, please call us. With appropriate care, most toxicity will resolve within a few days.**