



## CHEMOTHERAPEUTIC AGENTS

Chemotherapy drugs act by killing rapidly dividing cells. They not only kill cancer cells, but can affect other cells in the body and lead to significant side effects. After injection of chemotherapy drugs, they are metabolized and then excreted from the body in urine and feces. Because these drugs can be dangerous to people and animals, waste material from treated patients must be disposed of carefully. In almost all cases, the types of material excreted in the urine and feces has been changed to a safe form, but to be on the safe side we want owners to handle any vomit, urine or feces excreted within 48 hours of a treatment as if it might be dangerous. Please use latex gloves (either a set of "Playtex" type dish gloves or a pair we have provided) when cleaning up messes. Clean up messes promptly, place them into a plastic bag and dispose in the regular trash. Urine can be hosed to dilute it. If any drugs have particular problems with waste excretion we will generally keep your pet in the hospital until the excretion is safe. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know immediately.

**Adriamycin:** Also called Doxorubicin. This is a red liquid given intravenously. It can cause severe irritation if given outside the vein. Bone marrow suppression and GI upset are common. Some animals develop colitis (irritation of the colon) or have allergic reactions while the drug is given. After at least 6 doses, a type of heart disease may develop.

**Vincristine:** Also called Oncovin. This drug must be given intravenously or will cause extreme irritation. It has mild effects on the bone marrow but can make the bone marrow suppression of other drugs more severe. It may cause constipation or dizziness.

**Cytosan:** This drug can be given by injection or orally in pill form. It causes bone marrow suppression and GI upset. It can also cause a form of bladder irritation. If this is being given in pill form, owners must wear gloves when handling the pills.



**L-Asparaginase:** Also called Elspar. This drug is given intramuscularly. It can cause allergic reactions and so animals must be observed for 1 hour after injection. It causes bone marrow suppression and GI upset.

**Cis-platin:** This drug is a form of platinum that must be given IV. It can cause kidney problems and so is always given with large amounts of fluid. Bone marrow suppression and GI upset are also possible. **THE URINE EXCRETED AFTER INFUSION OF CIS-PLATIN CONTAINS ACTIVE DRUG!** Patients will always be kept at the hospital until they empty their bladders at least once before going home. Urine should be handled with gloves and diluted with a hose for 72 hours post-injection. Cis-platin is very toxic to cats.

**Carboplatin:** This drug is related to cis-platin but cats can tolerate it very well. It may cause GI upset and bone marrow suppression. **THE URINE EXCRETED AFTER INFUSION OF CARBOPLATIN CONTAINS ACTIVE DRUG!** Patients will always be kept at the hospital until they empty their bladders at least once before going home. Urine should be handled with gloves and diluted with a hose for 72 hours post-injection.

**Prednisone:** This commonly used drug will most likely make patients feel better. It is anti-inflammatory and does kill some tumor cells, especially lymphomas. It will cause increased thirst and urination and may improve appetite. It does not cause the typical chemotherapy side effects listed above.