**Oxaliplatin and Gemcitabine – germ cell**

**Indication**
Palliative treatment for relapsed metastatic seminoma, non seminoma or combined tumours.

**ICD-10 codes**
Codes pre-fixed with C38, C48, C56, C62, C63, C75.3.

**Regimen details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 and 8</td>
<td>Gemcitabine</td>
<td>1000mg/m^2</td>
<td>IV infusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oxaliplatin</td>
<td>130 mg/m^2</td>
<td>IV infusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cycle frequency**
21 days

**Number of cycles**
Usual maximum 6 cycles. Consultant decision to give further cycles.

**Administration**

Administer gemcitabine first. Gemcitabine is administered in 250-500mL sodium chloride 0.9% over 30 minutes.

Oxaliplatin is administered in 250mL glucose 5% over 2 hours.

Oxaliplatin is not compatible with sodium chloride 0.9%. Lines must not be piggybacked or flushed with sodium chloride 0.9% immediately after the infusion.

Patients should be observed closely for platinum hypersensitivity reactions, particularly during the first and second infusions. Hypersensitivity reactions may occur within a few minutes following the initiation of the infusion of oxaliplatin. Facilities for the treatment of hypotension and bronchospasm must be available.

If hypersensitivity reactions occur, minor symptoms such as flushing or localised cutaneous reactions do not require discontinuation of therapy: the infusion may be temporarily interrupted and when symptoms improve restarted at a slower infusion rate. Chlorphenamine 10mg IV may be administered.

Severe reactions, such as hypotension, bronchospasm or generalised rash/erythema require immediate discontinuation of oxaliplatin and appropriate therapy should be initiated.

Oxaliplatin may cause transient paraesthesia of hands and feet and laryngopharyngeal dyseaesthesia (unpleasant sensations in the throat). Onset is during or within hours of infusion and resolves within minutes to a few days. Symptoms are exacerbated by cold, so patients should be advised to take appropriate precautions. This does not require treatment or dose reduction but subsequent infusions should be given over 6 hours.

**Pre-medication**
Usually none required

Patients who have previously experienced Grade 1 or 2 platinum hypersensitivity should receive the following premedication:
- 45 minutes prior to Oxaliplatin: Dexamethasone 20mg IV
- 30 minutes prior to Oxaliplatin: Chlorphenamine 10mg IV and Ranitidine 50 mg IV
Patients who develop peripheral neuropathy may be considered for calcium gluconate 1g and magnesium sulphate 1g given together in 250mL 5% glucose IV over 20 minutes pre- and post-oxaliplatin infusion. Caution is required in giving this treatment to patients with known hypercalcemia or those receiving therapy with digoxin or thiazide diuretics.

**Emetogenicity**
This regimen has moderate-high emetic potential.

**Additional supportive medication**
- H₂ antagonist or proton pump inhibitor if required.
- Mouthwashes as per local policy.
- Oral magnesium supplementation between cycles in addition to the intravenous magnesium administered at the time of chemotherapy if required as per local magnesium replacement guidelines.
- Anti-emetics as per local policy.
- Consider GCSF as primary prophylaxis from day 9

**Extravasation**
Oxaliplatin is an exfoliant (Group 4)
Gemcitabine is neutral (Group 1)

**Investigations – pre first cycle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Validity period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FBC</td>
<td>14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+E (including creatinine)</td>
<td>14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFTs</td>
<td>14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP, HCG, LDH</td>
<td>14 days (repeat on day 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where appropriate offer pre-treatment sperm storage.

**Investigations – pre subsequent cycles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Validity period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FBC</td>
<td>96 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U+E (including creatinine)</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFTs</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP, HCG, LDH</td>
<td>7 days (repeat weekly during treatment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Standard limits for administration to go ahead**
If blood results not within range, authorisation to administer must be given by prescriber/consultant

**Day 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutrophils</td>
<td>≥ 1.5 x 10⁹/L*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platelets</td>
<td>≥ 75 x 10⁹/L* (≥ 100 x 10⁹/L on day 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculated CrCl</td>
<td>&gt; 50 ml/min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilirubin</td>
<td>≤ 1.5 x ULN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Dose modifications**

- **Haematological toxicity**

**Day 1:**
If neutrophils < 1.5 \( \times 10^9 \)/L or platelets < 75 \( \times 10^9 \)/L delay for 7 days and if recovered resume at full doses. If more than one delay reduce dose of gemcitabine to 75% for all future doses.

If febrile neutropenia (neutrophils < 0.5 \( \times 10^9 \)/L and fever requiring IV antibiotics) – reduce all subsequent doses of gemcitabine to 75% and oxaliplatin to 100mg/m\(^2\).

**Day 8:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neutrophils (x ( 10^9 )/L)</th>
<th>Platelets (x ( 10^9 )/L)</th>
<th>Gemcitabine dose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \geq 1.5 ) and ( &gt; 100 )</td>
<td>( \geq 100 )</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 - &lt;1.5 or 50 - 99</td>
<td>&lt; 100</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1.0 or &lt; 50</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
<td>Omit day 8 and Re-start next cycle with 75% gemcitabine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Renal impairment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CrCl (mL/min)</th>
<th>Oxaliplatin dose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \geq 50 )</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 30</td>
<td>Omit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gemcitabine**
If CrCl < 30mL/min consider dose reduction (consultant decision)

- **Hepatic impairment**
Lack of information available on the use of gemcitabine in patients with hepatic impairment, therefore, used with caution. If bilirubin > 1.5 x ULN, consider reducing dose to 800mg/m\(^2\) (consultant decision).

**Oxaliplatin:**
Little information available. Probably no dose reduction necessary, consultant decision.

- **Other toxicities**

**Oxaliplatin:**
If neurological symptoms occur, use the following oxaliplatin dose adjustments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toxicity grade</th>
<th>Oxaliplatin dose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (persisting until next cycle)</td>
<td>100mg/m(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (&gt;7 days but resolved before next cycle)</td>
<td>100mg/m(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (persisting until next cycle) or 4</td>
<td>Discontinue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adverse effects** - for full details consult product literature/ reference texts

- **Serious side effects**
Myelosuppression
Nephrotoxicity
Ototoxicity
Neurotoxicity
Laryngopharyngeal dysaesthesia
Infertility
Haemolytic uraemic syndrome*
Interstitial pneumonitis
Secondary malignancy
Long term risk of cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome
Osteonecrosis of the hip
*Gemcitabine should be discontinued at the first sign of microangiopathic haemolytic anaemia (such as rapidly falling haemoglobin with concomitant thrombocytopenia, elevated bilirubin, creatinine, blood urea nitrogen or LDH. Renal failure may not be reversible with discontinuation of therapy, dialysis may be required.

- **Frequently occurring side effects**
  - Cold sensitivity
  - Myelosuppression
  - Constipation, diarrhoea
  - Stomatitis, mucositis
  - Alopecia
  - Nausea and vomiting
  - Anorexia

- **Other side effects**
  - Raised transaminase
  - Electrolyte disturbances
  - Fatigue
  - Headache

**Significant drug interactions** – for full details consult product literature/ reference texts

- **Warfarin/coumarin anticoagulants:** Avoid use due to elevations in INR. Switch to low molecular weight heparin during treatment.

- **Antibiotics:** The renal toxicity of oxaliplatin is potentiated by aminoglycoside antibacterials (e.g. gentamicin) and amphotericin. Aminoglycosides should be avoided. If aminoglycosides are prescribed, close monitoring of renal function and serum antibiotic levels is required.

**Avoid all nephrotoxic drugs where possible**

**Additional comments**

Dose related peripheral sensory neuropathy can occur with oxaliplatin. It usually occurs after a cumulative dose of 800mg/m2. It can occur after treatment with oxaliplatin is completed, and is usually reversible, taking approximately 3 – 5 months to recovery.

**References**

- Summary of Product Characteristics Oxaliplatin (Sanofi) accessed 27 April 2016 via www.medicines.org.uk
- Summary of Product Characteristics Gemcitabine (Hospira) 27 April 2016 via www.medicines.org.uk

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Date: May 2016