

## Rituxan Side Effects

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Rituxan is a monoclonal antibody which is limited in its targets to only Lymphocytes (cancerous and/or normal) that have the CD20 marker on its surface. Thus, it causes no damage to any other cells so side effects are extremely rare. Notwithstanding, it is a substance that is foreign to your body so being put in your body, and your own immune system may cause you to react to that intrusion in strange ways.

First Infusion Side Effects (usually within 24 hours)

- \* Fever
- \* Cough
- \* Shakes
- \* Swelling
- \* Throat irritation or tightness
- \* Chills
- \* Sneezing
- \* Hives
- \* Itching
- \* Nausea
- \* Body Aches
- \* Headache
- \* Upper Repertory Tract Infection

During the first infusion of Rituxan is when most patients will experience some reactions. They will start the drip off very slowly to avoid most of them. These reactions include fever or chills, rigors (shivering uncontrollably), swelling of the mouth or throat, headache or body ache, hypotension (low blood pressure), itching, dizziness and maybe nausea. All patients will be premedicated with Tylenol and Benadryl to minimize these reactions. It is extremely important for the patient to notify the nurse the instant he/she notices any of these reactions so they can stop the drip and give further medication.

Almost every patient will experience some of those reactions but not all of them. Fevers, chills, rigors and other "allergic type" reactions are most common. There are many other very rare infusion reactions most of which are not serious.