

Phosphorus

Description

Phosphorus is a mineral that the body needs to function properly. Staff members take blood samples to check the amount of phosphorus in the body. If the level is too high or too low, the staff may make changes to medicines or fluids that the patient is receiving.

Hypophosphatemia (not enough phosphorus in the blood)

Hypophosphatemia can occur:

- When your body is not getting enough phosphorus by mouth;
- When your body is not absorbing the phosphorus in the stomach;
- When the level of magnesium in the blood is low; and
- When your kidneys are not working well.

Medicines that can cause low phosphorus are diuretics (water pills), sucralfate, cisplatin, and carboplatin.

Possible side effects of hypophosphatemia

- Muscle weakness or numbness
- Feeling confused
- Seizures
- Decreased appetite
- Nausea or vomiting

Staff members can give phosphorus to increase the amount of this mineral in the blood. It is available in these forms:

- A 250-mg tablet (KPhos[®])
- A 250-mg powder (NeutraPhos[®])
- A clear liquid that can be given into a vein (IV)

Special instructions

- Neutra Phos[®] packets must be dissolved in at least 30 ml (2 tablespoons) of liquid.

This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.

Phosphorus

- Please talk to the doctor or nurse if you think you are having symptoms of hypophosphatemia. If you are in the local area, call 595-3300. If you are outside the Memphis area, dial toll-free 1-866-2STJUDE (1-866-278-5833), and press 0 once the call is connected.

Hyperphosphatemia (too much phosphorus in the blood)

Hyperphosphatemia can occur:

- When your kidneys are not working well;
- If you have decreased parathyroid hormone; or
- If you have tumor lysis syndrome (a fast killing of cancer cells) or diabetic ketoacidosis.

Possible side effects of hyperphosphatemia

- Muscle spasms
- Kidney failure
- Low calcium

To decrease the amount of phosphorus in the blood, staff members will give you large amounts of IV fluids. You may also receive aluminum hydroxide or sucralfate to decrease the amount of phosphate being absorbed in the stomach.

Special instructions

- Please talk to the doctor or nurse if you think you are having symptoms of hyperphosphatemia. If you are in the local area, call 595-3300. If you are outside the Memphis area, dial toll-free 1-866-2STJUDE (1-866-278-5833), and press 0 once the call is connected.

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