

Imatinib (Gleevec, Imkeldi)

About This Medicine

IMATINIB (i MAT in ib) treats some types of cancer. It works by blocking a protein that causes cancer cells to grow and multiply. This helps to slow or stop the spread of cancer cells. It is given orally (by mouth).

This medicine may be used for other purposes; ask your care team if you have questions.

Possible Side Effects

- Nausea and vomiting (throwing up)
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Pain in your abdomen
- Tiredness
- Swelling of the hands, feet, or any other part of the body
- Bone and/or muscle pain
- Muscle cramps
- Rash

Note: Each of the side effects above was reported in 30% or greater of people treated with imatinib. All possible side effects are not included. Your side effects may be different depending on your cancer diagnosis, condition, or if you are receiving other medicines in combination. Please discuss any concerns or questions with your care team.

Warnings and Precautions

- Severe swelling of the hands, feet, or any other part of the body. Fluid may build up around your lungs and/or heart.
- Severe bone marrow suppression. This is a decrease in the number of white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets. This may raise your risk of infection, make you tired and weak, and raise your risk of bleeding.
- Abnormal bleeding – symptoms may be coughing up blood, throwing up blood (may look like coffee grounds), red or black tarry bowel movements, abnormally heavy menstrual flow, nosebleeds, or any other unusual bleeding.

- Congestive heart failure – your heart isn't pumping blood as well as it should be, and fluid can build up in your body
- Changes in your liver function, which can cause liver failure and can be life-threatening.
- Stomach problems such as indigestion, bloating (distention), stomach ulcers and perforation - an abnormal hole in your stomach, intestine, esophagus, or other organ, which can be life-threatening.
- Severe allergic skin reaction. You may develop blisters on your skin that are filled with fluid or a severe red rash all over your body that may be painful.
- Tumor lysis syndrome. This medicine may act on your cancer cells very quickly. This may affect how your kidneys work and can be life-threatening.
- Changes in your thyroid function if you have had your thyroid removed
- Changes in your kidney function

Note: *Some of the side effects above are very rare. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your care team.*

Important Information

- This medicine may impair your ability to drive or use machinery. Use caution and talk your care team about any precautions you may need to take.

How to Take Your Medicine

- **Tablets:** Swallow tablets whole, with food and a large glass of water to avoid an upset stomach. Do not crush tablets.
- If you have trouble swallowing the tablets, the tablets can be dissolved in a glass of water or apple juice. The required number of tablets should be placed in the correct amount of liquid (approximately 50 mL for a 100 mg tablet, and 200 mL for a 400 mg tablet). Stir the mixture with a spoon and drink immediately after complete disintegration of the tablet(s).
- **Oral solution:** Take solution with a meal and a large glass of water. Before measuring and preparing the oral solution, make sure you wear latex gloves. Use an oral syringe and bottle adapter to measure the medicine. Do not use a teaspoon to measure your medicine. Follow the instruction given to you to make sure you are measuring the correct dose of medicine.
- **Missed dose:** If you miss a dose, take your next dose at the regular time. Do not take 2 doses at the same time and do not double up on the next dose.
- **Overdosage:** If you think you have taken too much of this medicine contact a poison control center or emergency room at once.
- **Handling:** Wash your hands with soap and water, before and after handling your medicine, your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- If any of the tablets are broken, do not touch them with bare hands. If you get any of the content of a broken tablets on your skin, you should wash the area of the skin well with soap and water right away. Call your care team if you get a skin reaction.
- This medicine may be present in the urine, stool and other body fluids such as blood, vomit, semen, and vaginal fluids. Take precautions to prevent others from coming in contact with your medicine or your body fluids. Follow safety precautions during your treatment and for as long as directed by your care team after your treatment. If you take a pill each day, follow these precautions every day.



- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the original container at room temperature. Keep tightly closed. Protect from moisture. Keep out of the reach of children and pets.
- **Disposal of unused medicine:** Do not flush any expired and/or unused medicine down the toilet or drain unless you are specifically instructed to do so on the medicine label. Some facilities have take-back programs and/or other options. If you do not have a take-back program in your area, then please discuss with your care team how to dispose of unused medicine.

Treating Side Effects

- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- Get regular exercise, with your care team's approval. If you feel too tired to exercise vigorously, try taking a short walk.
- To decrease the risk of infection, wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid close contact with people who have a cold, the flu, or other infections.
- Take your temperature as your care team tells you, and whenever you feel like you may have a fever.
- To help decrease the risk of bleeding, use a soft toothbrush. Check with your care team before using dental floss.
- Be very careful when using knives or tools.
- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine pale yellow.
- If you throw up or have diarrhea, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid).
- To help with nausea and vomiting, eat small, frequent meals instead of three large meals a day. Choose foods and drinks that are at room temperature. Ask your care team about other helpful tips and medicine that is available to help stop or lessen these symptoms.
- If you have diarrhea, eat low-fiber foods that are high in protein and calories and avoid foods that can irritate your digestive tracts or lead to cramping.
- Ask your care team about medicine that can lessen or stop your diarrhea.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your care team if you are experiencing pain.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your care team says you may. Keep the areas around the rash clean and dry. Ask your care team for medicine if your rash bothers you.

Food and Medicine Interactions

- Avoid grapefruit or grapefruit juice while taking this medicine as it may raise the levels of imatinib in your body which could make side effects worse.
- Check with your care team about all other prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) you are taking before starting this medicine as there are known medicine interactions with imatinib. Also, check with your care team before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.



- There are known interactions of imatinib with blood thinning medicine such as warfarin. Ask your care team what precautions you should take.
- Avoid the use of St. John's Wort while taking imatinib as this may lower the levels of the medicine in your body, which can make it less effective.
- Let your care team know if you are taking or plan to take iron supplements.

When to Call Your Care Team

Call your care team if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher
- Chills
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Tiredness and/or weakness that interferes with your daily activities
- Feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way (palpitations)
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing
- Pain in your chest, especially when you lean forward or take deep breaths
- Cough
- Nausea that stops you from eating or drinking and/or is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Throwing up more than 3 times a day
- Trouble swallowing
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with weakness or lightheadedness
- Severe abdominal pain that does not go away
- Signs of abnormal bleeding such as coughing up blood, throwing up blood (may look like coffee grounds), easy bleeding or bruising, red or black tarry bowel movements, abnormally heavy menstrual flow, nosebleeds, or any other unusual bleeding
- Decreased or very dark urine
- New rash and/or itching or a rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicine
- Swelling of the hands, feet, or any other part of the body
- Weight gain of 5 pounds in one week (fluid retention)
- Unexplained weight gain
- Pain that does not go away or is not relieved by prescribed medicine
- Signs of liver problems: dark urine, pale bowel movements, pain in your abdomen, feeling very tired and weak, unusual itching, or yellowing of the eyes or skin
- Signs of tumor lysis: confusion or agitation, decreased urine, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, muscle cramping, numbness and/or tingling, seizures
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and fatigue (low energy, feeling weak)

Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy:** This medicine can cause serious birth defects. If you can become pregnant, use birth control while taking this medicine and for 14 days after the last dose. Let your care team know right away if you think you may be pregnant.



- **Breastfeeding:** Do not breastfeed while taking this medicine and for 1 month after the last dose.
- **Fertility Warning:** This medicine may affect your ability to have children in the future. If you plan to have children, talk with your care team.

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