



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Nilotinib

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Tasigna

Brand Names: Canada

Tasigna

Warning

- This drug may cause a prolonged QT interval (a type of heartbeat that is not normal). If this happens, the chance of other unsafe and sometimes deadly abnormal heartbeats may be raised. Sudden deaths have happened in people taking this drug. Do not take this drug if you have low potassium or magnesium levels or a history of long QT on ECG. Your heartbeat will be watched often with an ECG. Talk with your doctor.
- Do not take this drug if you are taking certain other drugs, including any drugs that can raise the chance of a prolonged QT interval (a type of heartbeat that is not normal). There are many drugs that interact with this drug. Talk with your doctor and pharmacist to make sure it is safe to take this drug with all of your drugs.
- Take this drug on an empty stomach. Take at least 1 hour before or at least 2 hours after a meal.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat a type of leukemia.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you cannot have galactose or you have lactase deficiency, lactose intolerance, or glucose-galactose malabsorption.
- If you take any drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) that must not be taken with this drug, like some other drugs used for HIV or certain drugs used for seizures, infection, or stomach or bowel problems. There are many drugs that must not be taken with this drug.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug and for 2 weeks after your last dose.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

For all patients taking this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor. Rarely, some bleeding problems have been deadly.

- If you have upset stomach, throwing up, diarrhea, or are not hungry, talk with your doctor. There may be ways to lower these side effects.
- This drug may lower blood flow to the heart, brain, or leg. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Patients with cancer who take this drug may be at a greater risk of getting a severe health problem called tumor lysis syndrome (TLS). This may lead to death. Call your doctor right away if you have a fast or abnormal heartbeat; any passing out; trouble passing urine; muscle weakness or cramps; upset stomach, throwing up, diarrhea, or not able to eat; or feel sluggish.
- Liver problems have happened. Call your doctor right away if you get signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- If you need to take an antacid or a drug like famotidine or ranitidine, talk with your doctor about how to take it while taking this drug.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice.
- If you are in remission and your doctor tells you to stop taking this drug, you may have more muscle and bone signs than before you stopped treatment. These signs include arm, leg, bone, spine, muscle, or joint pain. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- This drug may cause harm to an unborn baby. A pregnancy test will be done before you start this drug to show that you are NOT pregnant.
- Women must use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Ask your doctor how long to use birth control. If you get pregnant, call your doctor right away.

Children:

- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.

- As your child grows, your child's doctor may change your child's dose. Give this drug as your child's doctor has told you.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- Signs of electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, seizures, not hungry, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, more thirst, more hungry, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Chest pain or pressure or passing out.

- Fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Dizziness.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Change in eyesight.
- Leg pain, leg feels cold, or change in skin color of the leg.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or feeling less hungry.
- Back, muscle, or joint pain.
- Hair loss.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Nose and throat irritation.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Itching.
- Night sweats.
- Dry skin.
- Muscle spasm.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take on an empty stomach. Take 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals.
- Take with a full glass of water.
- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.
- Capsule may be opened and contents sprinkled on 1 teaspoon of applesauce. Swallow within 15 minutes after mixing. Do not store for future use.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or

get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

Last Reviewed Date

2019-12-05

Copyright

© 2020 Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug Information, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Nilotinib - Last updated on January 26, 2020

©2020 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center