

Medical Oncology

Drug Information Sheet

Imatinib (Gleevec): a drug to treat your cancer.

What should I avoid while receiving *Imatinib (Gleevec)*?

- Avoid use of acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Do not use Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil). Other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines are okay to use. Talk to your doctor if you are taking ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil).
- Avoid eating grapefruit or drinking grapefruit juice.
- *Imatinib (Gleevec)* increases the effects of pain medicine. Talk to your doctor if you are taking prescription pain medicine. Your dose may need to be adjusted.
- Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice while taking *Imatinib (Gleevec)*.
- *Imatinib (Gleevec)* may increase the effects of *cannabis*, *tetrahydrocannabinol* or *Cannabidiol*. Use with caution.
- Avoid using this medicine with steroids. Using steroids may decrease how well *Imatinib (gleevec)* works. Talk to your doctor if you are taking prescription steroids.
- Do NOT use Echinacea.
- This medicine may increase levels of Red Yeast Rice. Talk to your doctor if you are taking Red Yeast Rice.

Dose and Schedule:

- You will take this medicine by mouth.
- *Imatinib (Gleevec)* should be taken at the same time every day with food (helps prevent upset stomach). Take as directed.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Swallow the tablets whole with water. Do not crush, open, break, or chew medicine.
- If you are having trouble swallowing *Imatinib (Gleevec)*, it may be dissolved in water or apple juice (using ¼ cup for 100 mg tablet, 1 cup for 400 mg tablet). Stir until dissolved and take right away.
- If you have any unused *Imatinib (Gleevec)*, do not throw it in the trash and do not flush it down the sink or toilet. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about proper disposal of *Imatinib (Gleevec)*.
- *Imatinib (Gleevec)* has many drug interactions. Tell your doctor all the prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products you are taking.
- Your doctor may change your dose, briefly stop or completely stop treatment with *Imatinib (Gleevec)*, if you have side effects.
- **DO NOT START A NEW CYCLE WITHOUT TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR FIRST.**

If you miss a dose of *Imatinib (Gleevec)*:

- Skip the missed dose and return to normal schedule.
- If vomiting occurs after taking a dose, take the next dose at the scheduled time.
- Do not take an extra dose or two doses at one time.
- Write down if you miss a dose and let your doctor know about any missed doses.

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Storage and Handling:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will get this drug from a special pharmacy through the mail. We will help you through the process. • The drug must be kept in a secure place out of reach of children and pets, so no one else can take this drug. Never share <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> with anyone else. • Store <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> at room temperature in a dry place and away from light. Do not store in a bathroom. • Keep in original bottle: do NOT place tablets in a pill box. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever possible, give <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> to yourself and follow the steps below. If a family member, friend or caregiver gives <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> to you, they also need to follow these steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wash hands with soap and water ○ Put on gloves to avoid touching the medicine (gloves are not needed if you give <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> to yourself). ○ Do not let women who are pregnant or who may get pregnant touch the tablets without wearing gloves. ○ Carefully remove <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> from its package to a small disposable cup. ○ Do not lay the medicine on the counter. ○ Take the medicine immediately by mouth with water. ○ Remove gloves and do not use them for anything else. ○ Throw gloves and disposable cup in household trash. ○ Wash hands with soap and water. ○ Do not touch or handle crushed or broken tablets. 	

You **MAY OR MAY NOT** experience the side effects listed below

Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
<p>Increased risk for infection due to decreased blood counts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid contact with people who have infections, colds or flu. • Wash your hands often. • Report chills or a fever of 100.4° or higher to your doctor right away, day or night. • Report any signs or symptoms of infection, such as cough, burning with urination, skin redness or sores. • Call your doctor before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.
<p>Lower than normal red blood cells Anemia</p>	<p>Call you doctor if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ shortness of breath with activity ○ fatigue ○ dizziness ○ fast heartbeat or a heartbeat that does not feel normal ○ headache

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Increased risk for bleeding due to decreased blood counts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report signs of bleeding or bruising. • Avoid taking aspirin or aspirin products unless your doctor tells you to take it. • Use soft toothbrush. • Use electric razor. • Talk to your doctor before any scheduled medical or dental procedures. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Severe headache. ○ Blood in stools or urine. ○ Bleeding for a long period. ○ Uncontrolled bleeding ○ Bruising
Fluid retention or swelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluid may build up in the lining of your lungs, the sac around your heart, or your stomach. • Do not stand for long periods of time. • Keep your legs elevated when sitting or lying down. • Avoid eating salty foods, which can increase swelling. • Avoid wearing tight-fitting clothes and shoes. • Weigh yourself daily. • Call your doctor right away if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notice swelling in your body, especially in your hands, legs or feet. ○ Shortness of breath or trouble breathing ○ Have a dry cough ○ Have chest pain when taking a deep breath. ○ Gain 5 pounds or more in one week.
Skin rash or itching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use moisturizing lotions to keep skin hydrated after bathing. • Use tepid water, rather than hot water. • Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing. • Use over-the-counter anti-inflammation and anti-itch creams (hydrocortisone cream or diphenhydramine). • Apply cool, wet cloth to soothe skin. • Avoid using perfumes and cologne. • Avoid rubbing and scratching. • Drink water and non-caffeine beverages. • Notify your doctor of rash, itching or swelling. This may occur on the face and can be around your eyes.
Nausea or vomiting Decreased appetite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take nausea medicine as instructed. Let your doctor know if it is not working for you. • Eat smaller, frequent meals. • Try liquid nutrition supplements (Boost, Ensure). • A dietitian is available to talk with you.

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Severe skin reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a moisturizing cream free from alcohol, perfume or dye at least twice a day. • When outside, use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun. • Choose mild soaps. • Use tepid water, rather than hot water. • Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing. • Apply cool, wet cloth to soothe skin. • Avoid using perfumes and cologne. • Avoid rubbing and scratching. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin ○ a skin rash that bothers you or does not go away ○ acne ○ redness, swelling, peeling, or tenderness of hands or feet ○ any skin redness, itching, rash or blisters that ooze or peel ○ areas of skin color loss • Your doctor may prescribe anti-inflammation creams or antibiotics by mouth. • Your doctor may prescribe steroids.
Fatigue or weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be more tired than usual or have less energy. • Stay as active as possible, but know it is okay to rest as needed. • Try to do some activity every day. • Plan your activities, and do them at a time of day when you feel more energetic. • Avoid driving or doing other tasks that call for you to be alert.

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Belly pain and gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following can cause more gas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common gas-causing foods include beans, peas, lentils, cabbage, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, whole-grain foods, mushrooms, certain fruits, and beer and other carbonated drinks. Try removing one food at a time to see if your gas improves. ○ Dairy. Reducing dairy products from your diet can lessen symptoms. You also may try dairy products that are lactose-free or take milk products supplemented with lactase to help with digestion. ○ Sugar substitutes. ○ Fried or fatty foods. ○ Carbonated beverages • Regular exercise may help decrease gas. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ severe belly pain ○ bloody stools (dark, tarry or sticky) ○ nausea
Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep well hydrated with water or fluids. • Take over the counter anti-diarrhea medicine (Immodium A-D™ or loperamide HCL). Use the “<i>Helpful Tips for Diarrhea after Chemotherapy or Radiation Therapy</i>” instruction sheet. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More than 4 loose stools in 24 hours ○ A fever of 100.4° or higher ○ bad stomach pain or cramps ○ dizziness or feel faint ○ bloody stools (dark, tarry or sticky)
Headache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pain medicine as prescribed. Call your doctor if the pain is not under control. Do not take Aspirin. • Call your doctor if your headache: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follows a head injury ○ Lasts more than 48 hours ○ Is severe or starts suddenly ○ Is associated with vomiting, visual disturbance, neck stiffness, drowsiness, confusion, rash, weakness in arm or leg, or numbness; or is made worse by coughing or lowering the head.
Bone, muscle, joint pain	Use pain prescription as directed. Notify your doctor if the pain is uncontrolled.

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Possible Side Effects:	What to do:
Fever or shivering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink caffeine free fluids to stay well hydrated. • Report chills or a fever of 100.4° or higher to your doctor right away, day or night. • Report any signs or symptoms of infection, such as cough, burning with urination, skin redness or sores. • Call your doctor before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.
May cause dizziness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have someone drive you home. • Change positions slowly. • Avoid driving or doing other tasks that call for you to be alert.
Coumadin (Warfarin) dosing	If you are taking Coumadin (warfarin), talk with your doctor. You may need to have your blood work checked more closely while you are taking it with this medicine.
<i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i> will be in urine and stool for 48 hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers will need to handle soiled linens and clothing wearing gloves or using a bag as a barrier. • Keep your soiled items separate from others' dirty laundry and wash right away. • Women who are pregnant should not handle your soiled clothing or linens. • Wash any skin that body waste has touched with soap and water. • You may use the same toilet that you normally use. • If the toilet or toilet seat becomes dirty with urine, stool or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet • Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet. • It is safe to hug and kiss.
Avoid pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women should not become pregnant and men should not get a partner pregnant while taking <i>Imatinib (Gleevec)</i>. • This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. • Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug and for 1 month after stopping this drug. • If you or your sex partner gets pregnant while taking this drug or within 1 month after stopping this drug, call your doctor right away. • May cause fertility problems.

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Less common side effects that may happen

Less common side effects	What to do:
<p>Tumor Lysis Syndrome Caused by rapid tumor cell death</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of caffeine free fluids to stay well hydrated. • Call your doctor right away if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have a fast heartbeat or a heartbeat that does not feel normal ○ pass out ○ have trouble passing urine ○ have muscle weakness or cramps ○ have an upset stomach ○ are throwing up ○ have loose stools ○ fever ○ chills ○ confusion ○ shortness of breath ○ seizure ○ dark or cloudy urine ○ unusual tiredness
<p>Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) or Cardiomyopathy</p>	<p>A rare side effect could cause weakening of the heart muscle. Call the doctor or nurse right away if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any shortness of breath ○ increased or unexplained cough ○ swelling in feet or legs ○ sudden weight gain of more than 3 pounds in a day ○ chest discomfort
<p>Liver problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab results will be checked. • Call your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dark urine (tea colored) ○ severe right sided stomach pain ○ light colored stools ○ bruising or if you start to bleed easily ○ yellowing of skin or eyes ○ severe nausea or throwing up ○ unexplained weight gain ○ your belly feels big or bloated

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Less common side effects	What to do:
Changes in kidney function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kidney function can be affected.• Electrolytes and kidney function will be checked.• Dose may be held or adjusted if kidney function is decreased.• Talk to you doctor before taking NSAIDs (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve).• To help maintain good kidney function stay well hydrated with water and non-caffeine liquids.• Notify your doctor if you have:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ changes in mood or confusion○ smaller amount of urine than normal○ blood in urine○ swelling in ankles○ trouble emptying your bladder○ weight gain○ painful urination
These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor.	