

Possible side effects

Increase of liver enzymes in a blood test

What to do?

- If your liver enzymes are too high, your doctor may tell you to stop taking the drug
- Please seek medical advice immediately if you have signs of liver problems such as yellow eyes or skin.

Mouth ulcer

What to do?

- Avoid alcohol and irritating food e.g. spicy or sour foods.
- Gargle with salt water or mouthwash prescribed by doctor as directed.

Conjunctivitis / eye irritation

What to do?

- Please seek medical advice immediately if you have eye discomfort or changes in eyesight.

Rare but life-threatening side effect e.g. interstitial lung disease

What to do?

- Please seek medical advice immediately if you have the following symptoms such as sudden dyspnoea, shortness of breath, cough or fever.

If side effect symptoms persist or worsen, contact the doctor immediately.

If you notice any allergic reactions like skin itchiness, face or hand swelling, breathing difficulty, etc., consult your doctor immediately.

Potential drug interaction

1. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medications.
2. Some of the medications may interact with gefitinib, particularly:
 - Anti-fungals, such as ketoconazole, itraconazole, voriconazole
 - Anti-biotics, such as clarithromycin, erythromycin
 - Anti-HIV medicines, such as ritonavir
 - Anti-convulsants, such as carbamazepine, phenytoin and phenobarbitone
 - Anti-tuberculosis medicines, such as rifampicin
 - Anti-coagulants, such as warfarin
 - Medicines which affect your gastric acid, such as pantoprazole, famotidine and aluminium / magnesium hydroxide
 - St John's wort

What if I miss a dose?

- If it is within 12 hours of the missed dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Then take the next dose as usual.
- If it is over 12 hours since the missed dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose as usual.
- Do not double the dose.
- Inform your doctor about any missed dose during follow-up appointment.

How to store?

1. Keep out of reach of children.
2. Store in a cool, dry place and away from direct heat and light.

For any queries, please seek advice from your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Information for patient taking oral targeted therapy

Gefitinib



What is Gefitinib?

Gefitinib is an oral targeted therapy designed to target cancer cells.

Gefitinib targets a protein called 'epidermal growth factor receptor' (EGFR) which is involved in the growth and spread of cancer cells. It blocks the receptor so that it cannot signal the cell to grow.

Indication

Gefitinib is used in the treatment of EGFR mutation positive non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

How to use?

Always take gefitinib exactly as your doctor has told you.

- It should be taken at about the same time each day.
- It can be taken with or without food.
- If you need to take drugs which affect your gastric acid, please consult your doctor or pharmacist.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice during your treatment with gefitinib.

Precautions

1. Use the medication as directed by the doctor.
2. If you have history of drug allergy, consult your doctor or pharmacist before using the medicine.
3. Discard all medications that have expired or no longer required.
4. Do not share the medication with other people.
5. Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding. Do not breastfeed during treatment.
6. Please consult your doctor if symptoms persist or worsen after using the medicine.
7. Avoid handling the medicine if you are pregnant.
8. Wash hands after you have handled the medicines.
9. Consult doctor or pharmacist on the use of over-the-counter medications, Chinese medicines, herbal medications and vaccination during your treatment.
10. Sexual activities are not contraindicated during treatment but you are advised to use barrier contraception (such as condoms). Inform your doctor if you are in doubt of being pregnant.

Possible side effects and their management

Possible side effects

Skin rashes, dryness or itching

What to do?

- Wear loose cotton clothing.
- Use moisturising creams or lotions.
- Avoid direct sun exposure, you may use a sunblock or wear a hat while conducting outdoor activities.

Diarrhoea

What to do?

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid fatty or spicy foods, dairy products and high fiber content foods (e.g. fruits, vegetables, wholemeal bread, digestive biscuits).
- Take the anti-diarrhoeal medications prescribed by your doctor if necessary.

Nausea, vomiting and decreased appetite

What to do?

- Eat small frequent meals with a balance diet.
- Avoid foods with strong flavouring.
- Maintain adequate fluid intake.
- Take the antiemetic medications prescribed by your doctor if necessary.

Fatigue

What to do?

- Avoid driving or operating machinery.
- Balance activities with rest.