

### Possible side effects

Oedema (swelling around your eyes, in your feet or lower legs may occur if your body retains extra fluid)

#### What to do?

- Contact your doctor if you experience a rapid unexplained weight gain.
- If swelling in your feet or lower legs is a problem, try to elevate your feet when sitting and avoid tight clothing.
- If symptoms worsen, diuretics may be prescribed by your doctor to ease the condition.

### Increased bleeding risk

#### What to do?

- Avoid injuring yourself.
- Avoid constipation.
- Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush to avoid gum bleeding.
- Tell your doctor immediately if you have any unexplained bruising or bleeding, such as nosebleeds, bleeding gums, blood spots or rashes on the skin, vomiting blood, blood in urine or stool.

### Headache, leg aches/ cramps

#### What to do?

- These can often be eased by taking mild painkillers. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to prescribe or recommend a suitable painkiller for you if necessary.

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 imatinib, particularly:
  - Anti-fungals, such as ketoconazole, itraconazole and voriconazole
  - Anti-biotics, such as clarithromycin and 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, apixaban
  - St John's wort

## What if I miss a dose?

- If you are taking imatinib once a day, take the missed dose as soon as you remember if it is 12 hours or more until your next dose.
- If you are taking imatinib twice a day, take the missed dose as soon as you remember if it is six hours or more until your next dose.
- Otherwise, skip the missed dose. Then 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

## Imatinib

# What is Imatinib?

Imatinib is an oral targeted therapy called tyrosine kinase inhibitor. It acts by inhibiting the enzymes (tyrosine kinase) inside cancer cells, which is involved in the growth and spread of cancer cells. By blocking these signals, imatinib can stop the cancer cells from growing and cause them to die.

# Indication

Imatinib is used in the treatment of chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML), acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) or gastrointestinal stromal tumour (GIST).

# How to use?

Dosage varies from different indications and individual response.

- Imatinib should be taken with a meal and a large glass of water to minimise the risk of stomach irritations.
- Take it at the same time each day.
- Avoid grapefruit or grapefruit juice during treatment.

# 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 and for 1 month after you stop this medicine.
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
Increased infection risk
What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wash your hands often and maintain personal hygiene.</li> <li>● Avoid crowds and close contact with people who are sick.</li> <li>● Avoid taking raw food.</li> <li>● Seek medical advice immediately at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning sensation when passing urine.</li> </ul>

Skin rashes or itching
What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wear loose cotton clothing.</li> <li>● Use moisturising creams or lotions.</li> <li>● Avoid direct sun exposure, you may use a sunblock or wear a hat while conducting outdoor activities.</li> </ul>
Nausea, vomiting and decreased appetite
What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Eat small frequent meals with a balanced diet.</li> <li>● Avoid foods with strong flavouring.</li> <li>● Maintain adequate fluid intake.</li> <li>● Take the anti-emetic medications prescribed by your doctor if necessary.</li> </ul>
Fatigue
What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Avoid driving or operating machinery.</li> <li>● Balance activities with rest.</li> </ul>
Diarrhoea
What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drink plenty of fluids</li> <li>● Avoid fatty or spicy foods, dairy products and high fiber content foods (e.g. vegetables, fruits, wholemeal bread, digestive biscuits).</li> <li>● Take the anti-diarrhoeal medications prescribed by your doctor if necessary.</li> </ul>