

Ibrutinib

Imbruvica

This handout is for patients at Alvord Brain Tumor Center (ABTC). It describes the drug ibrutinib, its side effects, and precautions to follow when taking it.

What is ibrutinib?

The drug ibrutinib is used to treat adults with certain forms of leukemia and lymphoma. A common brand name of ibrutinib is Imbruvica.



Take ibrutinib with a full glass (8 oz.) of water.

How do I take it?

Take ibrutinib:

- At the same time each day
- With a full glass (8 oz.) of water
- With or without food
- Swallowed whole – not crushed, cut, or dissolved

If you cannot swallow the pills, talk with your ABTC care team.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose of ibrutinib or vomit after taking a dose:

- Do **NOT** take an extra dose or 2 doses at once.
- Just take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time.
- Call your ABTC care team and tell them that you missed a dose.

How do I store it?

Store ibrutinib in a closed container at room temperature. Make sure that it is away from heat, moisture, and direct light.

What are the side effects of ibrutinib?

Decreased White Blood Cells, Higher Risk for Infection

Taking ibrutinib can cause low white blood cell counts. This puts you at risk for an infection.

To help protect yourself from infections:

- Wash your hands often
- Avoid crowds and being around people who are sick
- Bathe often

Call your ABTC nurse if you have:

- A fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C)
- Chills
- Burning when you urinate (pee)
- A sore that becomes red, has drainage, or does not heal
- A “wet” cough that produces mucus or phlegm

Call your ABTC nurse BEFORE you take any medicine for a fever or chills.

Decreased Platelets, Higher Risk for Bleeding

Call your ABTC nurse if you have:

- A bloody nose that bleeds for more than 5 minutes even when you apply pressure
- See blood in your urine or stool
- Gums that bleed a lot when you floss or brush
- A cut that keeps oozing even when you apply pressure

Call 911 or go to the emergency room if you:

- Have a sudden, severe headache
- Are coughing up blood
- Have bleeding that has lasted longer than 5 minutes and will not stop

Nausea or Vomiting

We will give you a prescription for *ondansetron*, an anti-nausea medicine. Take ondansetron 1 hour before your dose of ibrutinib every day. Read and follow the instructions that come with the medicine. You may also take it at other times for nausea, as needed.

Help prevent nausea by eating small meals often during the day. Call your ABTC nurse if taking ondansetron does not ease your nausea or vomiting.

Diarrhea

To help ease diarrhea:

- Eat small meals throughout the day, instead of eating 3 large meals
- Eat bland, low-fiber foods such as bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast

Call your provider if you:

- Have an increase of 4 or more bowel movements within a 24-hour period
- Feel dizzy or lightheaded

Fatigue

While you are taking ibrutinib, you may be more tired than usual. But, it is important to be active. Try to get outside and walk about 30 minutes each day.

Muscle or Joint Pain

Stay as active as you can, but know that it is OK to rest as needed. Tell your care provider if pain interferes with your activity.

Drug and Food Interactions

- While you are taking ibrutinib, do **not** drink grapefruit juice, eat grapefruit, or eat Seville oranges, which are often found in marmalades.
- Some types of medicines can affect how ibrutinib works. Please tell your provider if you are taking:
 - *Anticoagulants* (blood-thinning medicines)
 - Medicines to treat infections
 - Medicines to treat HIV/AIDS

Safety Warnings

Birth Control (Contraception)

Women will have a pregnancy test before they start ibrutinib therapy.

While taking ibrutinib:

- Women should not become pregnant or breastfeed.

- Men should not get a partner pregnant.
- Women of childbearing age and men should:
 - Use birth control during therapy and **for at least 1 month** after their last dose.
 - Use a barrier form of protection during sex **for 48 hours** after taking their last dose of ibrutinib. The drug will be secreted in bodily fluids for 48 hours after each dose.

Safe Handling

- Only the patient should touch ibrutinib.
- If you are a caregiver and must handle the capsules:
 - Wear disposable rubber gloves.
 - Discard the gloves and wash your hands after handling.
- Caregivers should wear gloves when helping clean up any bodily fluids such as urine or blood.

Vaccines

During your ibrutinib treatment:

- Avoid live vaccines or close contact with those who have received live vaccines within the past 6 weeks.
- Talk with your provider before getting any vaccine.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

To talk with a nurse:

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 206.598.2282 and select option #2.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call our Community Care Line at 206.598.3300.