Vemurafenib (Zelboraf®)  
(“vem ue RAF e nib”)

How drug is given: by mouth

Purpose: to stop the growth of cancer cells in melanoma

This medication is part of a Risk Evaluation Mitigation Strategy (REMS) program. FDA approved medication guides are required for all educational purposes. Please use the following link to access this required medication guide.

Please print out the document at this Web address (hold CTRL and click):  

How to take this drug

1. Take this medication with or without food, but always take it the same throughout therapy. This medication should be taken with a full glass of water.

2. Swallow each tablet whole; do not crush or chew them. If you have trouble swallowing the tablet, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.

3. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is less than 4 hours until your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. **Do not double dose.**

4. Wash hands after taking the medication. Avoid handling crushed or broken tablets.

Storage

• Store this medication at room temperature (68-77°F, 20-25°C), away from heat, moisture, and direct light. Keep this medicine in its original container, out of reach of children and pets.

Things that may occur during treatment

1. You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. If these bother you, ask your doctor or nurse what types of drugs you may use to help with this pain.

2. Some of your hair may fall out with treatment. You may lose hair on your head as well as facial and body hair. Hair may grow back during treatment.

3. Some patients may have mild nausea. You may be given medication to help with this.
4. Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise can also be helpful in maintaining your energy.

5. Skin changes such as dryness, rash or darkening of skin color can occur on your body. There may be redness and pain over areas where you have gotten radiation therapy. Sunlight may cause your skin to burn easier, so use a sunscreen of SPF 30 or greater when you go outside. Do not go to tanning booths.

6. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D) to help control diarrhea. You may buy this at most drug stores. It is also important to drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help, tell your doctor or nurse.

7. You may get a headache. Please talk to your doctor or nurse about what you can take for this.

8. You are at risk of getting another type of skin cancer. If you notice any skin changes, show your doctor or nurse.

The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects in this teaching sheet may not be the same ones you experience. Your side effects may be different, depending on how often you receive treatment (your schedule) and how much you receive each time (your dosage). Side effects may also vary if you take other medications. Please talk with your doctor or nurse if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your health care team.

If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your health care team right away.

Managing your oral chemotherapy schedule at home can be challenging. To help you with this, consider using tools to help you keep track of your schedule and any side effects you may have. You can find these tools online at www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary.