



Chemotherapy: Axitinib (Inlyta®)

Pronounced: ("ax-it-a-nib")

How drug is given: By mouth

Purpose: To stop the growth of cancer cells in the kidney and other cancers

How to take this drug

- This medication can be taken with or without food.
- Swallow each tablet whole. Do not crush or chew them. If you have trouble swallowing the tablet, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.
- Axitinib can interfere with many drugs, which may change how this works in your body. Talk with your cancer care team before starting any new drugs, including over-the-counter drugs, natural products, herbal supplements, and vitamins.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not double dose.
- Do not drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit. Also, do not take St. John's wort. Taking these may increase the amount of medication in your body and worsen side effects.
- Wash hands after taking the medication. Avoid handling crushed or broken tablets.

Storage

- Store at room temperature, away from heat and moisture.
- Keep this medicine in its original container, out of reach of children and pets.
- If you have unused oral chemotherapy pills (tablets or capsules), please return them to the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Do not flush them down the toilet, dump in the sink, or throw away in the trash.

Things that may occur during treatment

- Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite and weight loss, may occur.
- Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is started. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D®) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug

stores. Be sure to also drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If these do not help within 24 hours, call your cancer care team.

- Your blood pressure may go up. If this happens, you may be given medication to help with this. If you have headaches or dizziness, tell your cancer care team right away.
- The palms of your hands or the soles of your feet may become red and painful. Tingling and peeling of the skin may also occur. This is called hand-foot syndrome. Avoid tight fitting shoes. Use thick (moisturizing) creams on hands and feet.
- 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 help you maintain your energy.
- In some cases, fatigue may be a sign of hypothyroidism. This is a condition in which your thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. If you feel fatigued and have symptoms such as cold intolerance or modest weight gain, talk with your cancer care team.
- This medicine may reduce the number of healthy red blood cells in your body. This can lead to anemia. Symptoms can begin with tiredness and progress to severe dizziness and shortness of breath. Call your cancer care team right away if you have shortness of breath, a fast heartbeat, dizziness or confusion.
- You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. If these bother you, ask your cancer care team what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.
- You may have changes in your voice, such as losing your voice or having trouble speaking.
- Your liver may be affected by this drug. Labs may be drawn to monitor your liver function.
- Some important minerals called electrolytes are found in your blood and body fluids. They can be affected by this medicine. Your cancer care team will check your blood work periodically to monitor your potassium, magnesium and sodium levels.
- In rare cases, a special problem with the nerves called reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS) may occur. Patients may have a headache, feel sleepy or confused, and have a change in eyesight, seizures or other problems. This can happen 16 hours to 1 year after starting Axitinib. This will usually get better or completely go away but some patients may continue to have some problems.

Things that may occur after treatment ends (even months to years later)

Sexual health, and fertility

It is very important to use birth control if you are having sex, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.

- Women should not breastfeed while receiving this drug.
- If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.

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.

The information in this document includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed here 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 are taking other medications. Please speak with your cancer care team if you have questions about possible side effects you may experience. This document should not take the place of conversations with members of your cancer care team.

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



Oral chemotherapy medicines are given by mouth in the form of capsules, tablets, or liquid. These safety tips will help you understand what to do when you are taking oral chemotherapy. **Please note:** If you are on a clinical trial, you may be given special instructions.

How to take this drug

- Swallow each tablet or capsule whole. Do not break, crush, or chew.
- Prepare your drug away from food and food prep areas.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule.
- Do not double the dose.
- If you are on a clinical trial, you will be given special instructions if you miss a dose.
- If you are unable to swallow the pill, speak with your nurse or pharmacist about other ways to take your medication.
- If you vomit or throw up your medication, call your physician for further instructions.
- Wash your hands after taking the medication. Avoid handling crushed or broken pills (tablets or capsules).

Storage

- Most oral chemotherapy medicine is stored at room temperature, away from excess heat and moisture. You will be told if the medication you are taking needs special storage or handling.
- Keep this medicine in its original container, in a safe place, away from other family medications. All medications need to be kept out of the reach of children and pets.

Disposal

- If you have unused oral chemotherapy pills (tablets or capsules), please return them to the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Do not flush down the toilet, dump in the sink, or throw away in the trash.

Safe handling of body waste in the home after chemotherapy

- Chemotherapy stays in the body for hours or even days, and is found in vomit, urine, stool, and sweat (body wastes). Special care must be taken to prevent the patient's body waste from coming into accidental contact with the patient or caregiver.

Body wastes

Patient and caregiver:

- You can use the toilet (septic tank or city sewage) as usual. There is no research to support double flushing to prevent accidental contact (although this may be suggested for certain medications). Ask your doctor or nurse what they suggest for your medication.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water after using the toilet. If urine, vomit, or stool gets on your body, wash with soap and water. Always wear gloves when cleaning equipment or disposing waste from a urinal or commode.
- Pregnant caregivers should **not** handle patient body waste.
- It is safe for family and friends to use the same toilet, as long as all body waste is cleaned from the toilet.
- To absorb urine or stool, use a disposable, plastic-backed pad, diaper, or sheet. Change it immediately when soiled. Then wash skin with soap and water.
- If you have an ostomy, you or your caregiver may want to wear gloves when emptying or changing appliances.

Laundry

- Always wear disposable gloves when handling sheets or clothes that have been soiled with body waste.
- Soiled items should be kept and washed separately from the other laundry.

Oral chemotherapy is a serious drug that requires extra caution. If you have questions or concerns about your oral chemotherapy, do not hesitate to call your clinician. For more tips, tools and short videos to help you manage oral chemotherapy visit our web page at

<http://www.dana-farber.org/oralchemo>