



Oral Chemotherapy: Crizotinib (Xalkori®)

Pronounced: "kriz-OH-ti-nib"

How drug is given: By mouth

Purpose: To treat non-small cell lung cancer and other cancers

How to take this drug

- Take with or without food.
- Swallow each capsule whole. Do not chew or crush. If you are unable to swallow, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.
- If you miss a dose, take as soon as possible – unless it is less than 6 hours before your next dose. Do not take two doses at the same time. If vomiting occurs after a dose, resume normal schedule without taking an extra dose.
- Wash your hands after taking the medication. Avoid handling broken or opened capsules.
- Crizotinib can interfere with many drugs, which may change how this works in your body. Talk with your doctor before starting any new drugs, including over-the-counter drugs, natural products, herbal supplements, and vitamins.
- Do not drink **grapefruit juice** or eat **grapefruit**. Also, do not take **St. John's wort**. Consuming these may increase the amount of medication in your body and worsen side effects.

Storage and disposal

- 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

- Your liver and kidneys may be affected by this medicine. On occasion, blood work will be taken to monitor their function.

- You may have blurry vision, see dark spots in your vision, or see flashes. This usually happens within 2 weeks after taking Crizotinib. Please tell your cancer care team if this happens.
- 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**.
- Mild to moderate nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite may occur. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- Mild constipation may occur after treatment begins. Please increase your fluid intake and increase fiber in your diet by eating fresh fruits and vegetables. A daily stool softener, such as docusate (Colace®) and/or laxatives such as senna (Senokot®) may be helpful. If these do not help within 48 hours, tell your cancer care team. Do not use bulk-forming laxatives such as Metamucil® without first talking with your cancer care team.
- Your body may not be able to get rid of extra fluid. This is called edema. You may notice some swelling in your arms or legs.
- 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.
- You may lose some feeling or have tingling or burning in your hands and/or feet. This is called peripheral neuropathy. This may increase with continued treatment. Please tell your cancer care team if you have trouble buttoning your clothes. Peripheral neuropathy should get better over time, after the drug is stopped. Avoid falls and cuts. Be careful with sharp objects, use handrails to avoid falls, and wear supportive shoes.
- Your white cells, which fight infection in your body, may drop. This is known as *neutropenia*. If you have a **fever of 100.5°F (38°C) or higher**, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, **call your cancer care team right away**.
- 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 phosphorus.
- Taste changes may occur. Foods may taste different.
- Rarely, your lungs may be affected. Call your cancer care team right away if you have chest pain that worsens with coughing or deep breaths, shortness of breath, cough, or fever.

Sexual health and reproductive concerns

If you are concerned about any of this, please talk with your cancer care team.

Women

- To keep from getting pregnant, use a barrier form of effective birth control and keep using it for at least 45 days after you stop treatment.
- Barrier methods of birth control prevent the sperm from reaching the egg. Discuss with your cancer team which type of barrier method is best for you. Some barrier methods are cervical caps, female/male condoms, and diaphragms with spermicides. Some are available over-the-counter; others must be prescribed.
- Women should not breast-feed while receiving this medicine.

Men

- It is very important to use birth control while taking this drug and for 90 days after stopping the drug, if you are having sex with a woman of child-bearing age, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.

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>