



## Chemotherapy: Pazopanib (Votrient®)

Pronounced: “paz-OH-pa-nib”

**How drug is given:** By mouth

**Purpose:** To stop the growth of cancer cells in kidney cancers, soft tissue sarcomas, and other cancers

### How to take the drug by mouth:

- Take dose at least 1 hour before food or at least 2 hours after food.
- Swallow each tablet whole; do not crush or chew. If you are unable to swallow the tablet, the pharmacist will give you specific instructions.
- 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.
- Pazopanib can interfere with many drugs, which may change how this works in your body. Talk with your doctor before starting any new drugs or supplements, including over-the-counter drugs, natural products, herbal supplements (such as St. John’s wort), and vitamins.
- Do not drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit. Consuming 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 the reach of children and pets.

### Things that may occur during treatment:

- Your blood pressure may go up. If this happens, you may be given medications to help with this. If you have a headache or dizziness, tell your doctor or nurse **right away**.
- Some patients may have mild nausea. You may be given medicine to help with this.
- Loose stools or diarrhea may occur within a few days after the drug is started. You can 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, tell your doctor or nurse.
- Some patients may feel very tired, also known as fatigue. You may need to rest or take naps more often. Mild to moderate exercise may also 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 experience this, and

have other symptoms, such as cold intolerance or modest weight gain, talk to your doctor or nurse.

- You may feel pain or weakness in your joints or muscles. If these bother you, ask your doctor or nurse what type of drugs you may use to help with this pain.
- Changes in your blood sugar may occur.
- You may get some hair thinning and/or changes in hair color.
- Skin changes, such as dryness or a rash on your body, may occur. Skin changes such as dryness or a rash on your body may occur. Ask your doctor or nurse what lotions or creams you may use.
- Your blood cell counts may drop. This is known as bone marrow suppression. This includes a decrease in your:
  - Red blood cells, which carry oxygen in your body to help give you energy
  - White blood cells, which fight infection in your body
  - Platelets, which help clot the blood to stop bleeding

If you have a **fever of 100.5°F (38°C) or higher**, chills, a cough, or any bleeding problems, **tell your doctor or nurse right away.**

- Your liver may be affected by this drug. Labs may be drawn to monitor your liver function

### Sexual health and fertility

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

#### Women

- It is very important to use birth control while taking this drug and for at least 2 weeks if you are having sex, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.
- Women should not breastfeed while receiving this drug.

#### Men

- It is very important to use birth control while taking this drug and for at least 2 weeks after your last dose if you are having sex with a woman of child-bearing age, because this drug may be harmful to an unborn baby.

Managing your oral chemotherapy schedule at home can be challenging. To help 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](http://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>