



## Trametinib (Mekinist®) (“Tra-me-ti-nib”)

**How drug is given:** By mouth

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

### How to take this drug

1. Take this medication on an empty stomach, at least 1 hour before food or 2 hours after food.
2. Swallow each tablet whole. Do not crush or chew. 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 within 12 hours of your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. **Do not double dose.**
4. Wash your hands after taking the medication. Avoid handling crushed or broken tablets.

### Storage

- Store refrigerated at 36 °F to 46° F. **DO NOT FREEZE.**
- Keep this medicine in its original container. Do not place tablets in a pill box.
- Keep away from moisture Do **not** remove the small plastic canister/packet inside the original pill bottle. This is called a desiccant. It protects the pills from moisture.
- Keep away from light.
- Keep 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

1. Skin changes, such as dryness, redness, itchiness, or a rash on your body, may occur. Ask your doctor or nurse what lotions or creams you may use.

2. The palms of your hands or the soles of your feet may become red and painful. This is called hand-foot syndrome. Tingling and peeling of the skin may occur. Avoid tight fitting shoes. Use thick (moisturizing) creams on hands and feet.
3. You may get mouth sores after this drug is given. It is important to keep your mouth clean. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush for brushing your teeth. You may have a burning feeling and redness inside the mouth or on the lips. Use a baking-soda mouth rinse 4 to 5 times a day.

**Mouth Rinse Recipe:**

Mix: 1 tsp **salt or baking soda** with 8 oz. glass of  
**water**

Other mouth rinses may be ordered by your doctor. Do not use a mouthwash with alcohol in it. It will dry out the mouth. If you cannot eat or swallow because of mouth pain, tell your doctor or nurse. Check with your doctor before having any dental work done.

4. You may have changes in your eyesight, including blurred vision or changes in how you see color. Eye exams may be done.
5. If you develop a new or worsening cough or shortness of breath, tell your doctor or nurse.
6. 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 doctor or nurse right away.
7. You may be at increased risk for bleeding, such as nosebleeds or blood in your urine or stool. If you have a nosebleed, sit with your head tipped slightly forward and apply pressure by lightly pinching the bridge of your nose between the thumb and forefinger. Call your doctor if you feel dizzy or faint, or if the bleeding does not stop in 10-15 minutes.
8. 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.
9. Loose stools or diarrhea may occur after the drug is taken. You may take loperamide (Imodium A-D) to help control diarrhea. You can buy this at most drug stores. It is important to drink more fluids (water, juice, sports drinks). If this does not help, tell your doctor or nurse.
10. Nail changes can occur, such as dark lines or changes in color. Nails may become more brittle. It is possible your nail could fall off. Nails usually return to normal after treatment is finished. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you notice these changes.
11. Fertility and related precautions:
  - 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.

*The above information includes some, but not necessarily all, of the possible side effects of this medication. The side effects listed 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 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 about your treatment and side effects you may experience during and after treatment.*

*If you experience any significant change in your health during or after treatment, contact a member of your cancer 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](http://www.dana-farber.org/OralChemoDiary).

THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS OR NOTES FOR THE PATIENT AND FAMILY:



## Oral Chemotherapy Fact Sheet

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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 waste information for 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 washed separately from other laundry.

Oral chemotherapy is a serious drug that requires extra caution. If you have questions or concerns about your oral chemotherapy, call your clinician. For more tips, tools and short videos on oral chemotherapy visit our web page at <http://www.dana-farber.org/oralchemo>

*The materials included on this page are for informational purposes only. The content is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.*

