



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: **GUTEM**

Other Names: Therapy for Advanced Renal Cell Carcinoma Using Temsirolimus

GU = **GenitoUrinary** (tumour group)
TEM = **TEM**sirolimus

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What is this drug used for?

- Temsirolimus is an intravenous drug treatment given as therapy to treat some type of advanced kidney cancer (renal cell cancer).
- **How do these drugs work?**
- Temsirolimus works by interfering with certain signalling pathways that are important in transmitting chemical signals needed for essential processes in the cell. It prevents the growth of blood vessels from surrounding tissue to a cancer, and prevents the increase in the number of cancer cells.

INTENDED BENEFITS

- This drug is being given to destroy and/or limit the growth of cancer cells in your body. This treatment may improve your current symptoms, and delay or prevent the onset of new symptoms.
- It may take several treatments before your doctor can judge whether or not this medicine is helping.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

How are these drugs given?

- Temsirolimus will be given intravenously (into the vein) once weekly. Four weeks of treatment will be referred to as a “cycle”. Therefore, temsirolimus is given as a 4-week cycle. Duration of treatment will depend on how well you respond to treatment.
- Each treatment will take about an hour. You will receive a dose of Benadryl®, a medication that helps to prevent allergy to Temsirolimus.

What will happen when I get my drugs?

- A blood test is done each cycle, on or about the day before each treatment. The dose and timing of your treatment may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects.
- The doctor will review the results of the blood test and meet with you each cycle.

Medication Interactions:

- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs. Other drugs such as Phenytoin (DILANTIN®), Warfarin (COUMADIN®), and Digoxin (LANOXIN®) may interact with Temsirolimus.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

Serious & Important Side Effects:

Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. The ones listed below are particularly important for you to be aware of as they are known to be directly related to the common actions of the drugs you are to receive.

- **Infection:** The number of white blood cells that help fight infections will be lowered. You will need to have a blood count done before each treatment to ensure that your blood count has recovered. If your white blood cell count becomes very low you could get a serious infection. **If you have a fever over 38°C or 100°F, call your cancer doctor immediately (24 hours a day) or go immediately to your nearest Hospital Emergency and tell the doctor you are on chemotherapy.**
- **Increased risk of bleeding:** The number of platelets (special blood cells that help your blood to clot normally after injury) may be lowered by the treatment. When the platelet count is low you may be more likely to bruise or bleed. Notify your cancer doctor promptly if you develop large or numerous bruises, or unusual bleeding (e.g. nosebleed that won't stop, blood in stool, urine, or sputum). Try to avoid using aspirin (ASA) or ibuprofen, if other pain medications could be used, as they may increase the risk of bleeding, but if you need to use one of these medications, let your doctor know.

Common chemotherapy side effects and management:

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Allergic reactions may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction may include flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, swelling or breathing problems. This can occur immediately or several hours after receiving temsirolimus and usually only with the first or second dose.	Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving temsirolimus or contact your oncologist <i>immediately</i> if this happens after you leave the clinic.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment and may last for several hours. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Choices to Help Control Nausea</i>.*
<p>Skin rashes, dryness, or itchiness may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>If itching is very irritating, call your doctor. Otherwise, be sure to mention it at your next visit.</p>
<p>Fever and chills may sometimes occur shortly after treatment with temsirolimus. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take acetaminophen (e.g. TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. • Fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer) which occurs more than a few days after treatment may be a sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor immediately.
<p>Diarrhea may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>If diarrhea is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Diarrhea during Chemotherapy</i>.*
<p>Constipation may sometimes occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Try ideas in <i>Suggestions for Dealing with Constipation</i>.*
<p>Sore mouth may sometimes occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth, or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. If your gums bleed, use gauze instead of a brush. Use baking soda instead of toothpaste. • Make a mouthwash with ½ teaspoon baking soda or salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day. • Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas for a Sore Mouth During Chemotherapy</i>.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Muscle or joint or other pain may sometimes occur.	You may take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.
Sugar control may sometimes be affected in diabetics.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
Swelling of hands, feet, or lower legs may sometimes occur if your body retains extra fluid.	If swelling is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate your feet when sitting. • Avoid tight clothing.
You may sometimes have trouble sleeping .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your doctor if you continue to have trouble sleeping. • This will return to normal when you stop taking temsirolimus.
Loss of appetite and weight loss may sometimes occur and may persist after discontinuation of temsirolimus.	Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i> .
Tiredness , weakness, and lack of energy may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired or weak. • Try the ideas in <i>Your Bank to Energy Savings: How People with Cancer Can Handle Fatigue*</i>
Increase in cholesterol or triglycerides may sometimes occur.	<p>Discuss this with your doctor if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of heart disease. • High blood pressure. • High cholesterol or triglycerides. <p>You may need to have your cholesterol level checked a few months after starting temsirolimus.</p>

*available through your nurse

If you experience symptoms or changes in your body that have not been described above but worry you, or if any symptoms are severe, contact: _____
at telephone number _____