



BC Cancer Agency

CARE + RESEARCH

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: LKCMLI

Other Names: Treatment of Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML) Using Imatinib (GLEEVEC®)

LK = LeuKemia (tumour group)

CML = Chronic Myeloid Leukemia

I = Imatinib

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What is this drug used for?

- Imatinib (i-mah-ti-nib) is used to treat chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and Philadelphia chromosome-positive (Ph+) acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

How does this drug work?

- Imatinib interferes with certain proteins (called tyrosine kinases) that make the growth of cancer cells out of control. Imatinib reduces the growth of cancer cells in the bone marrow and allows the growth of normal cells (red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets).

INTENDED BENEFITS

- Imatinib may stop or slow down the growth of cancer cells in your body. This may improve your symptoms and delay or prevent new symptoms from developing.
- It may take several weeks of treatment before your doctor can judge if imatinib is helping.

TREATMENT SUMMARY

How is this drug given?

- Imatinib is a tablet that you take by mouth.
- You will take imatinib once daily, or as directed by your doctor.
- Do not chew or crush imatinib tablets. Swallow whole.
- Take imatinib with food and a large glass of water.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice and pomegranate juice while taking imatinib, as these may increase the blood levels of imatinib and lead to more side effects.

What will happen when I get my drug?

- Blood and/or bone marrow tests will be done before you start imatinib and blood tests will be done periodically throughout your treatment. This is to make sure the medication is working for you. The dose and timing of imatinib may be changed based on your blood counts and/or other side effects. The doctor will review the results of the blood and bone marrow tests and meet with you when needed.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

The doctor will review the risks of imatinib and possible side effects with you, before starting treatment. If you haven't already received a copy, please ask for "*Information for the Patient: Imatinib*". It is also located on our website at:

www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/DrugDatabase/DrugIndexPt/imatinib

The pharmacists at the BC Cancer Agency are also available to answer your drug-related questions.

Medication Interactions

Some drugs may **interact** with imatinib and you may need extra blood tests or your doses may need to be changed. See "*Information for the Patient: Imatinib*".