



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: LUVERL

Other Names: Treatment of Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) with Erlotinib

LU = LUng
AV = AdVanced
ERL = ERLotinib

ABOUT THIS MEDICATION

What is this drug used for?

Erlotinib is a drug given to treat Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer. It is a tablet which is taken by mouth.

How does this drug work?

Erlotinib works by interfering with certain enzymes called tyrosine kinases that are important in transmitting the chemical signals needed for essential processes like cell division and replication in cancer cells.

INTENDED BENEFITS

This treatment is being given to slow down the growth of cancer cells in your body. This treatment can help with controlling some of the symptoms the cancer may be causing and may delay or prevent new symptoms from starting.

LUVERL TREATMENT SUMMARY

How is this drug given?

- Erlotinib is taken once a day, continuously, as long as you are benefiting from treatment and not having too many side effects.
- Erlotinib should be taken with a glass of water, on an empty stomach, either one hour before or two hours after eating.

What will happen when I get the drug?

- A blood test is done within one month of starting treatment.
- A blood test is also done two weeks after starting treatment and each time you see your oncologist.
- The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on your blood test results and/or other side effects.

CHEMOTHERAPY SIDE EFFECTS AND MANAGEMENT:

- Your oncologist will review the risks of treatment and possible side effects with you before starting treatment.
- The pharmacist will review how to take the medication and possible side effects with you on the day you first pick up your medication.
- Unexpected and unlikely side effects can occur with any drug treatment. *The ones listed below are particularly important for you to be aware of.* Please refer to the patient information handout entitled “**For the Patient: Erlotinib**” for a complete list of possible side effects and their management.

SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
Lung problems	Rare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lung problems such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, increased coughing, fever or chest pain may occur with erlotinib. If you have signs of lung problems that are <i>new</i> or suddenly <i>getting worse</i>, stop taking erlotinib and contact your oncologist immediately.
Liver failure	Uncommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular blood tests will be done throughout your treatment to monitor your liver function, See your oncologist as soon as possible if you have signs of liver problems such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-colored stools.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS	How Common Is It?	MANAGEMENT
Skin reactions such as rash, dryness, or itchiness are common.	Very common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moisturizing creams can help prevent or reduce skin dryness. If skin reactions persist or get worse contact your oncologist.
Diarrhea can occur.	Very common	<p>To help diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drink plenty of liquids. Eat and drink often in small amounts. Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Diarrhea During Chemotherapy</i>.* A prescription for loperamide (IMODIUM®) is sometimes required. <p>Note: If lactose in milk usually gives you diarrhea, the lactose in the tablet may be causing your diarrhea. Take LACTAID® just before your erlotinib dose.</p>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PATIENT

What other drugs can interact with LUVERL?

- Cigarette smoking can decrease the effectiveness of erlotinib. If you smoke, it is important that you stop smoking before starting this treatment.
- Other drugs such as ketoconazole, omeprazole (LOSEC®), ranitidine (ZANTAC®), rifampin (RIFADIN®, ROFACT®), and warfarin (COUMADIN®) may *interact* with erlotinib. Tell your doctor if you are taking these or any other drugs as you may need extra blood tests, your dose may need to be changed or your treatment may need to be held for a few days.
- Antacid doses should be separated from erlotinib doses by at least 2 hours. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other drug to reduce stomach acid.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new prescription or non-prescription drugs.

Other important things to know:

- Avoid **grapefruit** and **grapefruit juice** as these may interact with erlotinib
- The drinking of alcohol (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of this treatment.
- Erlotinib may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use *birth control* while you are being treated with erlotinib. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- Tell all doctors or dentists you see that you are being treated with erlotinib before you receive any treatment from them.

If you experience symptoms or changes in your body that have not been described in “For the Patient: Erlotinib” but worry you, or if any symptoms are severe, contact:
_____ at telephone number: _____