

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Nilotinib (Tasigna[®]) Capsule



What is Nilotinib?

- Nilotinib is used for the treatment of Philadelphia chromosome positive (Ph+) chronic myeloid leukemia (CML).

How is Nilotinib Administered / Taken?

- Nilotinib is taken orally twice daily (12 hours apart), at least 1 hour before and 2 hours after food.
- Swallow them whole with a glass of water, do not chew or crush the capsule. Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have difficulty swallowing.
- If possible, handle the medication yourself. If a family member or caregiver needs to give the medication, wash hands before and after handling the medication.
- If you miss a dose of Nilotinib, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- If you vomit the dose of Nilotinib, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- Do not double dose to make up for a missed dose.

Can Nilotinib be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- Antacids should be separated from Nilotinib by at least 2 hours. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other drugs to reduce stomach acid such as Omeprazole (Losec[®]) or Ranitidine (Zantac[®]) as these may need to be separated from Nilotinib as well.
- You should not drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit during your treatment with Nilotinib. It may increase the amount of Nilotinib in your blood to a harmful level.
- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including supplements, traditional or herbal remedies.

What are the Important Side Effects of Nilotinib?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Nausea or vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small frequent meals or sucking hard, sugar-free candy may help. • Please remember to take the medicines for nausea or vomiting as instructed by your doctor.
Rise in blood sugar and blood cholesterol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may require more frequent monitoring of blood sugar and blood cholesterol. Inform your doctor if you are on any blood sugar-lowering medications or lipid-lowering medications.
Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your doctor may prescribe medicines to control diarrhoea. Inform your doctor if it is severe and/or does not improve with medicine use. • Make sure you drink at least two litres (8 cups) of fluids every day when you are having diarrhoea. • Avoid milk or dairy products and/or high fibre food whilst you are having diarrhoea.

Side Effect	Management
Skin reactions such as rash, dryness, or itchiness may be common.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid direct sunlight and apply sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30 may help. Alternatively, wear a hat, long sleeves, and long pants outside on sunny days. • Apply moisturizers to dry areas. • Inform your doctor if skin reactions persist or get worse.
Risk of infection may be increased as Nilotinib can reduce the number of white blood cells in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce risk of infection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash your hands after using the toilet. -Avoid crowds and people who are sick. -Do not share food and avoid taking raw food. • Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience signs of an infection such as fever with a temperature above 38°C, chills, and burning sensation when passing urine. • Do not take Paracetamol (Panadol®) to relieve fever unless instructed by your doctor/ nurse.
Slow or abnormal heart rhythm (QT prolongation) rarely occurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if your heart is beating irregularly or fast, or if you feel faint, lightheaded, or dizzy.

Side Effect	Management
Bruising or bleeding may occur as Nilotinib can reduce the number of platelets in your blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce risk of bleeding problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Try not to bruise, cut or burn yourself. -Clean your nose by blowing gently. Do not pick your nose. -Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. -Be aware that bleeding may take a longer time to stop. Please proceed to the A & E department immediately if you experience signs of bleeding such as blood in urine or stools, or easy bruising.

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- You must not become pregnant during treatment with Nilotinib and must use an effective method of contraception. You should take appropriate contraceptive measures during and up to 2 weeks after cessation of treatment. If pregnancy occurs during your treatment, you must inform your doctor immediately.
- Nilotinib may have an anti-fertility effect. You should discuss with your doctor regarding fertility preservation prior to starting treatment.
- You should not breast-feed during treatment.

What Else can I do to Help My Condition?

- Exercise
Light exercise is recommended as it helps to improve mobility, balance and even emotional well-being. Avoid strenuous exercise, and rest when you are feeling tired.
- Stay positive
Understand your condition and take an active role in managing it. Do not be afraid to talk about it with your doctor/ pharmacist/ family members. Repressed feelings can be harmful to your immediate well-being and long- term health.
- Adequate hydration
Maintain adequate hydration with 2 to 3 litres (8 to 12 cups) of fluids per day unless informed by your doctor to restrict fluids. This will decrease your chances of getting constipation and also prevent dehydration.
- Medical and dental treatment
If you need to go into hospital for any reason other than cancer, always inform the doctors and nurses that you are taking Nilotinib. Talk to your cancer doctor if you think you need dental treatment. Always inform your doctor/dentist that you are on Nilotinib.

How do I Store Nilotinib?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

You can also find useful information with regards to your medication on this website:

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support>

