

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Nilotinib 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 usually taken orally twice a day, 12 hours apart, on empty stomach at least one hour before or two hours after food.
- The capsule should be swallowed whole. Do not chew or crush the capsules. Inform your doctor or pharmacist if you have difficulty swallowing.
- If possible, handle the medication yourself. If you need a family member or caregiver to give the medication, ensure that they wash their hands before and after handling the medication.
- If you miss or vomit a dose of Nilotinib, skip the missed dose and take it at the next scheduled timing.

Can Nilotinib be Administered/Taken with Other Medications?

- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including Traditional Chinese Medicines, Jamu medicines or supplements.
- Avoid grapefruits as they may increase the amount of Nilotinib in your body to a harmful level.

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
Risk of infection can occur 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 toileting. - Avoid crowds and people who are sick. - Avoid raw food. • Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience signs of infection such as fever with a temperature of 38°C and above, chills and shivering. Avoid taking Paracetamol (Panadol®) to relieve fever. Be aware that taking Paracetamol may

Side Effect	Management
	mask fever and hence delay treatment of infection.
Bruising or bleeding can 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"> - Do not pick your nose. - Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush. - Be aware that bleeding may take a longer time to stop. Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience any severe or persistent bleeding (e.g. passing a large amount of fresh blood in urine or stools, or passing black sticky stools) or significant bruising.
Nausea or vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take small, frequent meals. Avoid smells that precipitate nausea. Take medicines for nausea or vomiting prescribed by your doctor. Avoid tight-fitting clothes around the waist.
Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your doctor if this is severe and/or does not improve with medicine use. Drink at least two litres (8 cups) of fluids every day when you are having diarrhoea. Avoid milk, dairy products, high fibre food or spicy food whilst you are having diarrhoea.
Fatigue or tiredness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not drive or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. Inform your doctor if fatigue is persistent or worsens.

Side Effect	Management
Headaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mild pain can be relieved by taking Paracetamol (Panadol ®). Inform your doctor if pain is not controlled by Paracetamol (Panadol ®). Avoid Paracetamol (Panadol ®) when you are having fever. Inform your doctor if headache persists or if it is associated with vomiting, confusion or visual changes.
Skin reactions such as rash, dryness, or itchiness	<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 hat, long sleeve shirt, and long pant outside on sunny days. Apply moisturisers to dry areas. Inform your doctor if skin reactions persist or get worse.
Raised blood sugar levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nilotinib may cause raised blood sugar levels. Blood sugar levels often return to baseline upon stopping Nilotinib.
Increase in cholesterol or triglycerides levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may have your cholesterol level checked before starting Nilotinib, and periodically after starting.
Heart problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please proceed to A&E department immediately if you experience signs of heart problems such as shortness of breath, difficulty in breathing, chest pain, fast or slow heartbeat, feeling faint, lightheaded or dizzy.
Signs of stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience sudden onset of severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in an arm or leg.

Side Effect	Management
Pancreatitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your doctor if you are experiencing bloating, indigestion, oily stools, loss of appetite, sweating, abdominal pain, and weight loss.
Changes in the way the liver works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please proceed to the A&E department immediately if you experience any yellowing of eye white and skin or tea-coloured urine, pale stools or severe abdominal pain

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?

- 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 two weeks after stopping 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 two to three 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>

