



**BC Cancer Agency**

CARE + RESEARCH

*An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority*

## **For the Patient: ULKCMLN**

Other Names: Treatment of Chronic Myeloid Leukemia (CML) Using Nilotinib (TASIGNA®)

**LK = LeuKemia** (tumour group)

**CML = Chronic Myeloid Leukemia**

**N = Nilotinib**

### **ABOUT THIS MEDICATION**

#### **What is this drug used for?**

- Nilotinib (ni-law-ti-nib) is used to treat chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and Philadelphia chromosome-positive (Ph+) acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

#### **How does this drug work?**

- Nilotinib interferes with certain proteins (called tyrosine kinases) that make the growth of cancer cells out of control. Nilotinib 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**

- Nilotinib 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 nilotinib is helping.

### **TREATMENT SUMMARY**

#### **How is this drug given?**

- Nilotinib is a tablet that you take by mouth.
- You will take nilotinib twice daily, or as directed by your doctor.
- Do not chew or crush nilotinib tablets. Swallow whole.
- Take nilotinib on an empty stomach (one hour before or two hours after food)
- **DO NOT TAKE WITH FOOD.**
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice and pomegranate juice while taking nilotinib, as these may increase the blood levels of nilotinib 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 nilotinib 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 nilotinib 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 nilotinib and possible side effects with you, before starting treatment. If you haven't already received a copy, please ask for "*Information for the Patient: Nilotinib*". It is also located on our website at:

[www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/DrugDatabase/DrugIndexPt/nilotinib](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/HPI/DrugDatabase/DrugIndexPt/nilotinib)

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

## **Medication Interactions**

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