



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Temsirolimus
Other names: TORISEL®

- **Temsirolimus** (tem" sir oh' li mus) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancer. It is a clear liquid that is injected into a vein.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to temsirolimus or sirolimus before receiving temsirolimus.
- A **blood test** may be taken before each treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- Your doctor may tell you to **drink** extra fluids so that you will pass more urine. This will help prevent kidney problems.
- Other drugs such as sunitinib (SUTENT®), and ACE inhibitors such as ramipril (ALTACE®), lisinopril (ZESTRIL®) and perindopril (COVERSYL®) may **interact** with temsirolimus. Tell your doctor if you are taking these or any other drugs as you may need extra blood tests or your dose may need to be changed. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start or stop taking any other drugs.
- **Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice** for 48 hours before, and on the day of, your temsirolimus dose, as these may interact with temsirolimus.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of temsirolimus.
- Temsirolimus may cause **sterility** in men and **menopause** in women. If you plan to have children, discuss this with your doctor before being treated with temsirolimus.
- Temsirolimus may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best for both men and women to use **birth control** while being treated with temsirolimus and to continue for three months after finishing. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breast feed during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with temsirolimus before you receive any treatment from them.
- If you are planning to have **major surgery** (e.g., joint replacement), tell your surgeon that you are receiving temsirolimus. You may need to stop receiving temsirolimus prior to surgery and restart it only after your doctor says your wounds have healed.

Side effects are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur. Tips to help manage the side effects are included.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Allergic reactions may rarely occur. Signs of an allergic reaction may include flushing, rash, itching, dizziness, swelling or breathing problems.</p> <p>This can occur immediately or several hours after receiving temsirolimus and usually only with the first or second dose.</p>	<p>Tell your nurse if this happens while you are receiving temsirolimus or contact your oncologist immediately if this happens after you leave the clinic.</p>
<p>Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.</p>	<p>Apply cool compresses or soak in cool water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</p>
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment and may last for several hours. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take before your chemotherapy treatment and/or at home. It is easier to prevent nausea than treat it once it has occurred, so follow directions closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Try the ideas in Practical Tips to Manage Nausea.*
<p>Skin rashes, dryness, or itchiness may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>If itching is very irritating, call your doctor. Otherwise, be sure to mention it at your next visit.</p>
<p>Minor bleeding, such as nosebleeds, may sometimes occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit up straight and tip your head slightly forward. Tilting your head back may cause blood to run down your throat. • Pinch your nostrils shut between your thumb and forefinger or apply firm pressure against the bleeding nostril for 10 full minutes. • After 10 minutes, check to see if your nose is still bleeding. If it is, hold it for 10 more minutes. • Stay quiet for a few hours and do not blow your nose for at least 12 hours after the bleeding has stopped. • Get emergency help if a nosebleed lasts longer than 20 minutes.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Fever and chills may sometimes occur shortly after treatment with temsirolimus. Fever should last no longer than 24 hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. • Fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer) which occurs more than a few days after treatment may be a sign of an infection. Report this to your doctor <i>immediately</i>.
<p>Your white blood cells may decrease in the days after your treatment. They usually return to normal one week after your last treatment. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. When they are low, you are at greater risk of having an infection.</p>	<p>To help prevent infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom. • Avoid crowds and people who are sick. • Call your doctor <i>immediately</i> at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), chills, cough, or burning when you pass urine.
<p>Your platelets may decrease in the days after your treatment. They usually return to normal one week after your last treatment. Platelets help to make your blood clot when you hurt yourself. You may bruise or bleed more easily than usual.</p>	<p>To help prevent bleeding problems:</p> <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. • Avoid constipation. • Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush as your gums may bleed more easily. Maintain good oral hygiene. <p>Some medications such as ASA (e.g., ASPIRIN®) or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) may increase your risk of bleeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not stop taking any medication that has been prescribed by your doctor (e.g., ASA for your heart). • For minor pain, try acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) first, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day, but occasional use of ibuprofen may be acceptable.
<p>Diarrhea may sometimes occur.</p>	<p>If diarrhea is a problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of fluids. • Eat and drink often in small amounts. • Avoid high fibre foods as outlined in Food Choices to Help Manage Diarrhea.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Constipation may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Try ideas in Food Choices to Manage Constipation.*
Sore mouth may sometimes occur a few days after treatment. Mouth sores can occur on the tongue, the sides of the mouth, or in the throat. Mouth sores or bleeding gums can lead to an infection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush your teeth gently after eating and at bedtime with a very soft toothbrush. If your gums bleed, use gauze instead of a brush. Use baking soda instead of toothpaste. • Make a mouthwash with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda AND $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water and rinse several times a day. • Try the ideas in Food Ideas to Try with a Sore Mouth.*
Muscle or joint or other pain may sometimes occur.	You may take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day or ibuprofen (e.g., ADVIL®) for mild to moderate pain. Tell your doctor if the pain interferes with your activity.
Sugar control may sometimes be affected in diabetic patients.	Check your blood sugar regularly if you are diabetic.
Swelling of hands, feet, or lower legs may sometimes occur if your body retains extra fluid.	If swelling is a problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate your feet when sitting. • Avoid tight clothing.
You may sometimes have trouble sleeping .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your doctor if you continue to have trouble sleeping. • This will return to normal when you stop taking temsirolimus.
Taste alteration may sometimes occur.	Try the ideas in Food Ideas to Cope with Taste and Smell Changes .*
Loss of appetite and weight loss may sometimes occur and may persist after discontinuation of temsirolimus.	Try the ideas in Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite .*
Tiredness , weakness, and lack of energy may sometimes occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired or weak. • Try the ideas in Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout OR Your Bank to Energy Savings: Helping People with Cancer Handle Fatigue.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Hair loss does not occur with temsirolimus.	
Increase in cholesterol or triglycerides may sometimes occur.	Discuss this with your doctor if you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of heart disease. • High blood pressure. • High cholesterol or triglycerides. You may need to have your cholesterol level checked a few months after starting temsirolimus.

***Please ask your chemotherapy nurse or pharmacist for a copy.**

SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of a **stroke** such as sudden onset of severe headache, eyesight changes, slurred speech, loss of coordination, weakness or numbness in arm or leg.
- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C by an oral thermometer), shaking chills; severe sore throat, productive cough (coughing up thick or green sputum); cloudy or foul smelling urine; painful, tender, or swollen red skin wounds or sores.
- Signs of **bleeding problems** such as black, tarry stools; blood in urine; pinpoint red spots on skin; extensive bruising.
- Signs of a **blood clot** such as tenderness or hardness over a vein, calf swelling and tenderness, sudden onset of cough, chest pain, or shortness of breath.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.
- **Poor healing** of your gums or mouth after a dental procedure.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of **anemia** such as unusual tiredness or weakness.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- Signs of **bladder problems** such as changes in urination, painful burning sensation, presence of blood, or abdominal pain.
- Increased **sore throat or mouth** that makes it difficult to swallow comfortably.
- Excessive **thirst** or any increase in the volume or frequency of **urination**.
- Signs of **heart or lung problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, chest pain, chest pressure, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing, swelling of feet or lower legs, or fainting.
- For diabetic patients: uncontrolled blood sugars.

