



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient: Vemurafenib
Other names: ZELBORAF®

- Vemurafenib (vem" ue raf' e nib) is a drug that is used to treat some types of cancer. It is a tablet that you take by mouth.
- Tell your doctor if you have ever had an unusual or **allergic reaction** to vemurafenib before taking vemurafenib.
- **Blood tests** may be taken regularly during treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may be changed based on the test results and/or other side effects.
- It is important to **take** vemurafenib exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the directions.
- You may **take** vemurafenib with food or on an empty stomach as long as you take it the same way with each dose.
- Do not chew or crush vemurafenib tablets. **Swallow whole.**
- If you **miss a dose** of vemurafenib, take it as soon as you can if it is within 8 hours of the missed dose. If it is more than 8 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- If you **vomit** the dose of vemurafenib, skip the dose and go back to your usual dosing times. Do NOT repeat the dose. Let your doctor know as a medication to prevent nausea may be required for future doses.
- Other drugs such as warfarin (COUMADIN®), digoxin (LANOXIN®), and drugs for heart rhythm problems may **interact** with vemurafenib. 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 the duration of your treatment, as these may interact with vemurafenib.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) does not appear to affect the safety or usefulness of vemurafenib.
- Vemurafenib may damage sperm and may harm the baby if used during pregnancy. It is best to use **birth control** while being treated with vemurafenib and for 6 months after treatment. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment.

- **Store** vemurafenib tablets out of the reach of children, at room temperature, away from heat, light, and moisture.
- **Tell** doctors, dentists, and other health professionals that you are being treated with vemurafenib before you receive any treatment from them.

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>Contact your doctor immediately or get emergency help if this happens after you start taking vemurafenib.</p>
<p>Nausea and vomiting may occur after your treatment. Most people have little or no nausea.</p>	<p>You may be given a prescription for anti-nausea drug(s) to take 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 or dry skin may sometimes occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If rash is accompanied by signs of an allergic reaction such as flushing, dizziness, swelling, or breathing problems, call your doctor immediately. • If itching is very irritating, call your doctor. Otherwise, be sure to mention it at your next visit.
<p>Fever may sometimes occur.</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.
<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.*
<p>Constipation may sometimes occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise if you can. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Try ideas in Food Choices to Manage Constipation.*

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Headache may sometimes occur.	Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours if needed, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day.
Muscle or joint pain may commonly 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.
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.
Taste alteration may sometimes occur.	Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Cope with Taste and Smell Changes</i> .*
Loss of appetite and weight loss may occur.	Try the ideas in <i>Food Ideas to Help with Decreased Appetite</i> .
Tiredness and lack of energy may commonly occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are feeling tired. • Try the ideas in <i>Fatigue/Tiredness – Patient Handout</i> OR <i>Your Bank to Energy Savings: Helping People with Cancer Handle Fatigue</i>.*
Hair loss sometimes occurs with vemurafenib. Hair will grow back once you stop treatment with vemurafenib. Colour and texture may change.	If hair loss is a problem, refer to <i>Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</i> .*
Your skin may be more sensitive to the sun or sunburn more easily than usual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to <i>Your Medication Sun Sensitivity and Sunscreens</i>* or the <i>BC Health Guide</i> for more information. • After sun exposure, if you have a severe sunburn or skin reaction such as itching, rash, or swelling contact your doctor.
Numbness or tingling of the fingers or toes may rarely occur. This will slowly return to normal once your treatments are over.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful when handling items that are sharp, hot, or cold. • Tell your doctor at your next visit, especially if you have trouble with buttons, writing, or picking up small objects.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
<p>Abnormal heart rhythm (QT prolongation) rarely occurs.</p>	<p>Minimize your risk of abnormal heart rhythm by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always checking with your pharmacist and doctor about drug interactions when starting a new medication, herbal product, or supplement • avoiding grapefruit and grapefruit juice <p>Tell your doctor <i>immediately</i> or get emergency help if your heart is beating irregularly or fast, or if you feel faint, lightheaded, or dizzy.</p>
<p>A type of skin cancer called cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma may occur.</p>	<p>Check your skin and tell your oncologist right away if you notice any skin changes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new wart • sore or reddish bump that bleeds or does not heal • change in size, shape, or colour of a mole <p>Cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma is usually managed with simple removal (excision).</p>

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

STOP TAKING VEMURAFENIB AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including rash, dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.
- Signs of **heart problems** such as fast or uneven heartbeat, shortness of breath, dizziness, or fainting.

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

- Signs of **liver problems** such as yellow eyes or skin, white or clay-coloured stools.
- Signs of **kidney problems** such as lower back or side pain, swelling of feet or lower legs.
- **Numbness or tingling** in feet or hands.
- Changes in **eyesight, eye pain, or sensitivity of eyes to light**.
- **Scaly or crusted** areas on the skin, skin **sores** that do not heal, or any change in warts or moles.
- **Pain or tenderness in abdomen.**

