

## Ceritinib (Zykadia®)

Ceritinib is a type of anti-cancer treatment called a targeted therapy. The aim of this treatment is to control the cancer and its symptoms. Your doctor or nurse will be happy to answer any questions you may have about your treatments. You may find it useful to refer to the booklet 'Chemotherapy - a guide' which gives general information on staying well during anti-cancer treatments.

### Your treatment

Your doctor has prescribed you an anti-cancer treatment called ceritinib (Zykadia®) which is a capsule and is taken by mouth. You can remain on the capsules for as long as you are benefitting from the treatment and the side effects are tolerated.

The usual dose is 450 mg (**3 x 150mg capsules**) taken once a day at about the same time each day. The capsules should be swallowed whole. Do not crush, dissolve or open the capsules. **The capsules must be taken with food.** Food can range from a light to a full meal. If you miss a dose by more than 12 hours **do not take that dose** but continue with the medication as prescribed the following day.

This dose may be reduced by your medical team if you experience severe side effects.

Ceritinib should not be taken with grapefruit juice. Please tell your doctor or nurse about any other medication you are taking, as some other medications can increase toxicity or reduce the effectiveness of ceritinib. While you are taking ceritinib we will review you in clinic on a regular basis. This will be every four weeks, at the beginning of a new cycle of treatment. An extra visit after two weeks may be required during the first cycle. You will also have a routine blood test before the start of each cycle of treatment.

A chest X-ray and other tests such as CT scans will also be performed at regular intervals.

**We strongly advise current smokers to stop smoking while taking this treatment.** This is because smoking may reduce the effectiveness of treatment. If you would like help with stopping smoking, please let your doctor or nurse know and they can arrange support for you.

This treatment can have serious or possibly life-threatening side effects. It is very important that you report side effects straight away. Don't delay, if you feel unwell, please ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658**. The lines are open 24 hours a day.



## Flu vaccinations

**Is it alright for me to have a flu jab during the time I'm having chemotherapy?** It's safe to have a flu jab, but depending on the sort of chemotherapy you have had, it may not give quite as much protection against infection as usual. Some patients may need two vaccinations. However, if you're thinking of having any other vaccinations, do check with your Christie doctor first, because some vaccines should be avoided.

## Possible side effects

This treatment can cause many different side effects. Some are more likely to occur than others. Everyone is different and not everyone gets all the side effects. Most side effects are usually temporary, but in some rare cases they can be life-threatening. It is important to tell your hospital doctor or nurse about any side effects so they can be monitored and, where possible, treated.

## Common side effects (more than 1 in 10)

### • Shortness of breath (pneumonitis) (Warning!)

This treatment can cause inflammation of the tissue in your lungs. Symptoms of this include a cough that will not settle, fever or breathing difficulties. **If you develop severe shortness of breath it is important to contact this hospital straight away as this may be serious. Don't delay!**

### • Cardiac abnormalities (Warning!)

Sometimes ceritinib can cause patients to experience an irregular or abnormal heartbeat or changes in the usually electrical activity of the heart as seen on an ECG (electrocardiogram). If you experience chest pain, dizziness, fainting, or any loss of consciousness you must inform your medical team or nurse. It is important not to drive or operate machinery if these symptoms occur. In an emergency you should go immediately to your nearest accident and emergency department.

### • Visual disturbances

You may develop problems with your vision. These are often temporary difficulties adjusting to light and then dark surroundings or blurring of your vision. You may also experience 'flashing lights or floaters' in your visual field. These side effects are usually mild and improve over time. Tell your doctor or nurse if these side effects become worse. If your vision is affected you should not drive or operate machinery.

### • Lethargy

You may feel tired and lacking in energy. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. If you do feel tired, take rest and get help with household chores. If necessary, take time off work. Gentle exercise such as a daily walk can be beneficial.

### • Decreased appetite

You may lose your appetite and find eating large meals more difficult. It is best to try to eat smaller portions but do carry on trying to eat something even if you do not feel very hungry. Ask your nurse or doctor for advice on what to eat if this is causing you problems or you have unexpected weight loss.

### • Heartburn

You may develop a burning sensation in your chest. It is usually mild and manageable with antacids when needed. It may be worse after meals or during the night. Ask your nurse or doctor for advice if it is causing you problems.

### • Abdominal pain

You may experience pain in your upper abdomen, the stomach area. It is usually mild and not serious but it may become more severe. It may impact your eating habits and if it becomes a problem, tablets to reduce acid production may be helpful and can be bought from the pharmacy or prescribed by your GP.

- **Nausea and vomiting (sickness)**

The severity of this varies from person to person. Anti-sickness medication will be given along with your treatment if needed. If you continue to feel or be sick, contact your GP or this hospital.

- **Constipation**

This occasionally occurs in the long-term. Try to drink plenty of fluids and eat foods high in fibre. Tell your doctor who may prescribe a suitable laxative. Ask the staff for a copy of 'Eating: Help Yourself' which has useful ideas about diet when you are having treatment.

- **Diarrhoea**

If this becomes a problem while you are having treatment, anti-diarrhoea tablets can be bought from a pharmacy or prescribed by your GP for a temporary period until this is resolved. **If you develop diarrhoea it is important to contact this hospital straightaway as this may also be a sign of a serious infection. Don't delay!**

- **Skin rash**

You may develop a skin rash. This is usually mild and easily treated. It is most common on the face, neck, chest, and back. The rash tends to be mild. If the rash becomes red, painful, itchy or develops an 'acne-like' appearance please call this hospital. It is usually managed with creams. Sometimes the treatment dose may need to be reduced or delayed for a week or two. If you develop any signs that the rash is infected then the medical team will start a course of antibiotics.

- **Anaemia (low number of red blood cells)**

While having this treatment you may become anaemic. This may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. In some cases you may need a blood transfusion.

- **Hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar)**

An increase in your blood sugar levels may occur. People who have diabetes are at higher risk. Your blood sugar levels will be monitored regularly. If you start urinating often and notice an increased thirst you should contact your doctor or nurse.

- **Abnormal kidney and liver function tests**

It is important to monitor how your kidneys and liver are working as there may be a mild impairment while you are having treatment. This is done by routine blood tests. It is important to drink plenty of fluids while taking this medication. Please inform your medical team or nurse straight away if you notice you have a significantly decreased urine flow, darker urine than usual or any yellowing of your skin or eyes.

## **Rare side effects (less than 1 in 100)**

- **Increased risk of infection**

It is uncommon to develop an infection. Symptoms of infection include fever, shivering, sweats, sore throat, diarrhoea, discomfort when you pass urine, cough or breathlessness. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer so you can check your temperature. You can buy one from your local chemist.

**If you feel unwell, you have symptoms of an infection or your temperature is 37.5C or above, or below 36C contact the Christie Hotline straight away.**

## Serious and potentially life threatening side effects

In a small proportion of patients this treatment can result in very severe side effects which may cause life threatening complications. The team caring for you will discuss the risk of these side effects with you.

## Sex, contraception and fertility

**Protecting your partner and contraception:** We recommend that you or your partner use a condom during sexual intercourse, while you are on this treatment and for three months after finishing your treatment. This treatment is dangerous to unborn babies and this will also protect you and your partner from any drugs that may be present in semen and in the vagina. If you suspect that you may be pregnant, please tell your doctor immediately.

**Fertility:** This treatment may affect your ability to have children. Your doctor or nurse should have discussed this with you. If not, please ask them before you start treatment. **You should not take ceritinib if you are pregnant.**

## Late side effects

Some side effects may become evident only after a number of years. In reaching any decision with you about treatment, the potential benefit you receive from treatment will be weighed against the risks of serious long term side effects to the heart, lungs, kidneys and bone marrow. With some drugs there is also a small but definite risk of developing another cancer. If any of these problems specifically apply to you, the doctor will discuss these with you and note them on your consent form.

## Contacts

If you have any general questions or concerns about your treatment, please ring the area where you are having treatment:

Administration enquiries - **0161 918 7606/7610**

Chemotherapy nurse - **0161 918 7171**

Clinical trials unit - **0161 918 7663**

Lung specialist nurse team - **0161 918 2595**

Your doctor's secretary .....**0161 446**.....

For urgent advice ring **The Christie Hotline on 0161 446 3658** (24 hours)

Your consultant is: .....

Your hospital number is: .....

Your key worker is: .....

Notes:

© 2021 The Christie NHS Foundation Trust. This document may be copied for use within the NHS only on the condition that The Christie NHS Foundation Trust is acknowledged as the creator.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.



Contact The Christie Hotline for  
urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week