

# Regorafenib for hepatocellular carcinoma

Regorafenib 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 treatment.

## Your treatment

Your doctor or nurse clinician has prescribed for you a treatment which includes the tablet regorafenib

Regorafenib is taken by mouth as tablets once a day and is taken every day for 21 days followed by a 7 day break. This treatment can be repeated for as long as you are benefiting from it and the side effects are tolerated.

Your tablets should be taken daily at about the same time every day. Timing is not dependent on meals, and it is better to take the tablets either in the morning *or* evening. If you do take these tablets with meals, we advise you to avoid high fat foods, as this can reduce the effectiveness of the tablets. If you miss a dose, you will just need to take your next dose when it is due. You should store your medicine in a cool dry place, out of reach of children.

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.

## Possible side effects

Regorafenib 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)

- **Hypertension (high blood pressure)**

This is common, but can usually be controlled by adding to or changing anti-hypertensive medication. It is very rare for patients to experience any serious heart problems.



- **Diarrhoea**

Mild diarrhoea is common. Anti-diarrhoeal tablets (loperamide) can be prescribed to control your symptoms. Severe diarrhoea is less common. If you develop diarrhoea with an increase in stool frequency of 4 or more times above your normal daily bowel function, please contact The Christie Hotline.

- **Loss of appetite**

If you experience a loss of appetite, please be sure to tell your doctor or nurse at your next hospital visit. Ask staff for a copy of The Christie booklet 'Eating - help yourself' which contains useful suggestions about diet.

- **Altered voice**

Some people find that their voice changes in tone or becomes a little hoarse whilst having regorafenib. This is not a cause for concern and should settle when treatment is stopped.

- **Hypothyroidism**

This means that your thyroid gland may become underactive. We screen for this as it is quite common for patients who stay on regorafenib to have abnormal thyroid function blood tests. If your tests are abnormal, you may be prescribed thyroid hormone replacement tablets to correct this. If left untreated, this would make you tired and sensitive to the cold.

- **Prone to bleeding**

Regorafenib can make you prone to bleeding. You may have bruising or bleeding, for example, from the nose, gums or in the urine. Contact The Christie Hotline if this occurs. A small number of patients have experienced serious bleeding complications.

- **Altered liver function blood tests**

This medication can affect the way your liver and kidneys function. We will monitor this on a regular basis. It is usually mild, but can rarely cause more serious problems.

- **Hand/foot skin reaction**

Some people can experience reddening and peeling of the skin on the hands and feet. Simple moisturisers can help if this is mild, but if it interferes with walking or normal use of hands or fingers, please contact your team at The Christie. Try to keep your hands and feet cool, and if possible uncovered or wear loose-fitting cotton socks. Some treatments can make your skin more sensitive to the sun than usual. Sit in the shade, avoid too much sun and use a high factor sunblock cream.

- **Tiredness**

Regorafenib may make you feel tired and lacking in energy, but it should not affect your daily routine. Try to take rest and get help with household chores. If necessary take time off work. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial.

## **Uncommon side effects (less than 1 in 10)**

- **Hair thinning**

Your hair may thin, but you should not lose your hair altogether. The cancer information centre offers a coping with hair loss service to all patients where support, information and advice will be given. Drop-in, contact **0161 446 8100** or email **informationcentre@christie.nhs.uk**. Information about the wig service can also be found here and vouchers for wigs can also be obtained for eligible patients. The wig room provides a drop-in service, please see The Christie leaflet 'The wig fitting service' for further information.

The Maggie's Centre runs a Talking Heads hair loss support workshop for anyone who is anticipating or experiencing hair loss (both men and women). These sessions cover the practicalities of hair loss as well

as offering support with its emotional impact. Contact Maggie's on **0161 641 4848** or email [manchester@maggiescentres.org](mailto:manchester@maggiescentres.org).

- **Limb swelling**

Some patients on regorafenib experience some minor swelling of their limbs. This is not a major cause for concern. If it is troubling you, discuss it with your doctor at your next appointment.

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

- **Increased risk of serious infection**

You are vulnerable to infection while you are having chemotherapy. Minor infections can become life-threatening in a matter of hours if left untreated. 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, if you have symptoms of an infection or if your temperature is 37.5°C or above, or below 36°C contact The Christie Hotline straight away.**

- **Liver failure**

Some patients on treatment with regorafenib may experience a significant deterioration in their liver function. We will closely monitor your liver function by doing blood tests, but if you feel unwell or notice swelling of your abdomen, or yellow discolouration of the skin or eyes, you should contact The Christie Hotline immediately.

- **Blood clots**

During this treatment you are more at risk of blood clots in the legs (DVT) or lungs (PE). Occasionally these clots can be life-threatening. To help prevent clots, keep mobile and drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids.

- **Perforated abdomen (Warning!)**

Rarely, some patients have experienced severe pain caused by a hole within the lining of the gut. This is a higher risk for patients who have a risk factor such as previous surgery in the gut. Any sudden onset of severe abdominal pain should be investigated urgently. If this happens you should contact **999** immediately.

## **Serious and potentially life-threatening side effects**

In a small proportion of patients anti-cancer therapy can result in very severe side effects which may rarely result in death. 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 having this treatment. Regorafenib 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.

## 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 damage

## 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**

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

Your Consultant is: .....

Your hospital number is: .....

Your key worker is: .....

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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 **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

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