

Neratinib

What is Neratinib (ne-RA-ti-nib) and how does it work?

Neratinib is a type of oral, targeted cancer therapy called a “tyrosine kinase inhibitor”. Another name for this drug is Nerlynx. This drug dissolves in your digestive system, then goes into your blood stream. Neratinib finds cancer cells that have HER2 receptors. Once inside the cancer cell, Neratinib can prevent the cell from dividing and making new cancer cells. Neratinib is made in a laboratory.

What should I tell my doctor before taking Neratinib?

Talk to your doctor about the following:

- If you have ever had chemotherapy and the name of the chemotherapy drugs you were given.
- If you have ever had liver problems.
- If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant. Your doctor will talk with you about birth control while getting chemotherapy.
- If you are breastfeeding.
- If you have been told that you need to start a new medicine.
- The medicines/pills you are taking, including:
 - ▶ Medicines prescribed by any of your doctors
 - ▶ Herbs, including St. John’s Wort
 - ▶ Vitamins
 - ▶ Over-the-counter medicines

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

How does my doctor decide my treatment dose?

- To determine your treatment dose, your doctor and pharmacist will review the following: your lab results, your medicines, how well your liver is working, and any other health problems you have.
- This drug is taken by mouth one time each day with food. Patients usually take this drug for 1 year. You will see the doctor or nurse practitioner about every four weeks when you are getting this treatment.

How do I handle, store and dispose of Neratinib?

- Store the medicine in a closed container at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light.
- Do not store in your bathroom or in your refrigerator.
- Keep this medicine away from children and do not share it with anyone.
- Talk to your pharmacist about how to get rid (dispose) of your prescription medicines safely.

How do I take Neratinib?

- **Do not** crush, break, or chew the tablets.
- Take this medicine **with food** one time each day.
- Swallow the tablets with a full glass of water.
- Take Neratinib at the same time each day.
- If you miss a dose, wait until it is time for your next dose, and skip the missed dose. **Do not double up on doses.**
- Your dose may need to be changed in the future in order to find out what works best for you. Taking a lower dose of Neratinib does not mean the medicine will not work.
- **Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice, star fruit, or Seville oranges.** These can increase your risk of side effects.
- **Do not take proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) or histamine-2 receptor antagonists (H2RAs).** Examples include omeprazole (Prilosec), lansoprazole (Prevacid), esomeprazole (Nexium) ranitidine (Zantac), and famotidine (Pepcid). These prescription antacids can affect how well Neratinib works.
- **If you take short-acting antacids** such as Mylanta, Maalox, or Tums, or a calcium supplement for your bones, **take Neratinib 3 hours before or after taking the antacid or calcium.**

What are the side effects of this treatment?

Every person responds differently to treatment. Some of the more common side effects of this chemotherapy are:

- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Stomach pain, bloating or feeling “full”
- Decreased appetite and weight loss
- Fatigue or weakness
- Muscle spasms
- Rash or dry skin
- Changes in your nails (color changes or swelling around the nails)
- Urinary tract infections

When should I call my doctor?

You should call your doctor right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher

A fever can be life threatening if not treated. Your doctor may ask you to go to the hospital.

- Chills, sore throat, cough or a wound that does not get better
- Open sores on your lips, tongue or in your mouth
- Nausea that prevents you from eating or drinking
- Bleeding or bruising, including bloody or black stools or blood in your urine
- Diarrhea (4 or more loose stools in 24 hours), or diarrhea at night
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- Chest pain, fast or irregular heartbeat

How should I manage diarrhea?

- Loperamide (Imodium AD) should be taken for at least the first 2 months to prevent the diarrhea. The goal is for you to have 1 to 2 bowel movements per day. Take loperamide as follows:

Weeks 1 to 2 (days 1 to 14) Start: End:	4 mg three times daily (or as directed by doctor)
Weeks 3 to 8 (days 15 to 56) Start: End:	4 mg twice daily (or as directed by doctor)
Weeks 9 to 52 (days 57 to 365) If Loperamide needs to be continued.	Up to 16 mg/day (or as directed by doctor)

- Your doctor may talk to you about other medicines to control diarrhea.
- You should drink 8 to 10 eight-ounce glasses of non-caffeinated fluid each day throughout your treatment. It is important to keep hydrated while you are receiving treatment.
- Eat small meals often during the day. Do not eat big meals.
- Do not eat foods that are high in fiber, greasy, spicy, fatty or fried.
- Follow the **BRAT diet (Bananas, Rice, Applesauce, Toast)**

For more information about cancer, chemotherapy, side effects or how to take care of yourself during treatment, refer to your **Chemotherapy and You** book, or ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

You may also find it helpful to watch The James Patient Education videos at <http://cancer.osu.edu/patientedvideos> to help you learn tips for managing treatment side effects.