

# ORAL CANCER TREATMENT EDUCATION



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## TRAMETINIB

### Name of your medication

Generic name — trametinib (truh-MEH-tih-nib)

Brand name — Mekinist® (MEH-kih-nist)

### Common uses

Trametinib is used to treat patients with the following:

- Melanoma that has a genetic variant called *BRAF*V600E or V600K and may or may not be used in combination with dabrafenib.
- Non-small cell lung cancer, anaplastic thyroid cancer, solid tumors, and low-grade glioma that has a genetic variant called *BRAF*V600E and is used in combination with dabrafenib.

Trametinib may also be used for other treatments.

### Dose and schedule

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Taking trametinib as instructed is important to allow your treatment to be as effective as possible, so here are some key points to remember.

- Your dose may vary, but the usual dose of trametinib is 2 milligrams (2 mg) to be taken by mouth at a scheduled time once a day.
- Trametinib should be taken on an empty stomach (one hour before and two hours after a meal or snack) and at the same time each day.
- Trametinib should be taken whole and not crushed, cut, or dissolved. If you are unable to swallow trametinib, talk to your care provider or pharmacist for possible options.
- If you miss a dose of trametinib:
  - Take the missed dose only if it has been less than 12 hours since you were supposed to take it. Then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.
  - **Do not** take the missed dose if it has been more than 12 hours since you should have taken it. Simply take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.
  - **Do not** take two doses at one time.
  - Be sure to write down if you miss a dose and let your care provider know about any missed doses.

### Drug and food interactions

- Trametinib has many drug interactions. Inform your care providers of all prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal products that you are taking.
- Trametinib should be taken on an empty stomach (one hour before and two hours after a meal or snack).
- Talk with your care provider or pharmacist before taking new medications or supplements, or receiving any vaccines.

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### Storage and handling

Handle trametinib with care. Just like when chemotherapy is given into the vein, this drug can be toxic, and exposure of the drug to others should be limited.

- Store trametinib in the **refrigerator** (36°F–46°F) in a sealed plastic bag or closed container to prevent exposure to food and spills. **Do not** freeze.
- Keep trametinib out of reach of children and pets.
- Leave trametinib in the provided packaging until it is ready to be taken.
- Whenever possible, give trametinib to yourself and follow the steps below. If a family member, friend, or caregiver needs to give trametinib to you, they also need to follow these steps:
  1. Wash hands with soap and water.
  2. Put on gloves to avoid touching the medication. (Gloves are not necessary if you give the drug to yourself.)
  3. Gently transfer the trametinib from its package to a small medicine or other disposable cup.
  4. Administer the medicine immediately by mouth with water.
  5. Remove gloves and do not use them for anything else.
  6. Throw gloves and medicine cup in household trash.
  7. Wash hands with soap and water.
- A daily pill box or pill reminder **is not** recommended to be used with trametinib.
- If you have any unused trametinib, **do not** throw it in the trash and **do not** flush it down the sink or toilet. Talk to your care provider or pharmacist about proper disposal of trametinib.
- If you are traveling, put your trametinib in a sealed plastic bag. Ask your pharmacist if any additional travel precautions are needed.

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### Side Effects of Trametinib

The common side effects that have been known to happen in more than 30% of patients taking trametinib as monotherapy are listed in the left side of this table. You **MAY NOT** experience these side effects. Additional side effects may occur if used in combination with other cancer treatments. Options to help manage any side effects that do occur are included on the right side of this table. These should be discussed with your care provider. If you experience any side effect you cannot manage or that is not listed here, contact your care provider.

Possible Side Effect	Management
<b>Rash or itchy skin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep your skin moisturized with creams and moisturizing lotions to decrease the risk of rash or itchiness, and wear loose fitting clothing.</li> <li>Avoid using perfumes and cologne as these products may increase rash symptoms.</li> <li>Avoid being in the heat for long periods of time.</li> <li>Your provider may recommend an over-the-counter antihistamine or a topical cream.</li> </ul> <p>Sunlight can make symptoms worse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid sun exposure as much as possible to decrease the risk of sunburn. The highest exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation occurs from 10 am–4 pm.</li> <li>Wear long-sleeved clothing, with UV protection if possible.</li> <li>Wear broad-brimmed hats.</li> <li>Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB) with at least SPF 30 as often as directed on the bottle.</li> <li>Use lip balm with at least SPF 30.</li> </ul> <p>If your rash or itching continues to worsen, contact your care provider.</p>
<b>Changes in liver function</b>	<p>Your liver function will be checked periodically by a simple blood test. Contact your care provider if you notice any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yellowing of the skin or whites of your eyes</li> <li>Dark or brown urine</li> <li>Bleeding or bruising</li> </ul>

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Possible Side Effect	Management
<p><b>Diarrhea (loose and/or urgent bowel movements)</b></p>	<p>Monitor how many bowel movements you have each day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink 8–10 glasses of water or fluid each day unless your care provider has instructed you to limit your fluid intake.</li> <li>• Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day rather than a few large meals.</li> <li>• Eat bland, low-fiber foods, such as bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast.</li> <li>• Avoid high-fiber foods, such as raw vegetables, raw fruits, and whole grains.</li> <li>• Avoid foods that cause gas, such as broccoli and beans.</li> <li>• Avoid lactose-containing foods, such as yogurt and milk.</li> <li>• Avoid spicy, fried, and greasy foods.</li> </ul> <p>Contact your provider if any of the following occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of bowel movements you have in a day increases by 4 or more.</li> <li>• You feel dizzy or lightheaded.</li> </ul> <p>Your care provider may recommend an over-the-counter medication called loperamide (Imodium®) to help with your diarrhea, but talk to your care provider before starting this medication.</p>
<p><b>Decreased hemoglobin, part of the red blood cells that carry iron and oxygen</b></p>	<p>Your hemoglobin should be monitored using a blood test. When your hemoglobin is low, you may notice that you get tired or fatigued more easily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to get 7–8 hours of sleep per night.</li> <li>• Avoid operating heavy machinery if you feel too tired.</li> <li>• Find a balance between work and rest.</li> <li>• Stay as active as possible, but know that it is okay to rest as needed.</li> <li>• You might notice that you are more pale than usual.</li> </ul> <p>Let your healthcare provider know right away if you experience any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Palpitations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes in electrolytes and other laboratory values</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low albumin</li> <li>• Low sodium</li> <li>• Low calcium</li> <li>• Low magnesium</li> <li>• Low phosphate</li> <li>• High glucose</li> <li>• High alkaline phosphatase</li> </ul>	<p>Changes in some laboratory values may occur and should be monitored by a simple blood test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may not feel any symptoms if the changes are mild, and they usually are not a sign of a serious problem.</li> <li>• More severe changes may occur, which can be a sign of a serious problem.</li> </ul> <p>Notify your care provider if you have any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Chest discomfort</li> <li>• Weakness or fatigue</li> <li>• New aches and pains</li> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Swelling of your legs or feet</li> <li>• Red- or brown-colored urine</li> </ul>

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Possible Side Effect	Management
<b>Fluid retention or swelling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not stand for long periods of time.</li><li>• Keep your legs elevated when sitting or lying down.</li><li>• Try not to eat salty foods, which can increase swelling.</li><li>• Avoid tight-fitting clothing and shoes.</li><li>• Weigh yourself daily.</li></ul> <p>Contact your care provider if you notice any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swelling in the hands, feet, or legs</li><li>• You are short of breath</li><li>• You have gained 5 pounds or more in one week</li></ul>

### Serious side effects

- Trametinib may rarely cause a tear or hole in your intestine, called bowel perforation. Speak to your care team right away if you have a high fever, or nausea, vomiting, or severe stomach pain.
- Trametinib may be harmful to your eyes. Call your care team if you have any issue with your vision, or if you have pain in your eyes.
- Trametinib may cause your lung tissue to scar, which is called interstitial lung disease, or swelling of lung tissue, which is called pneumonitis. Call your care team if you are feeling short of breath, or have chest pain, a fever, or a lasting dry cough.
- When trametinib is used in combination with dabrafenib:*
  - You may be at a higher risk of bleeding. Contact your care team if you notice frequent nose bleeds, blood in your stool, bleeding that occurs by itself without injury, or bleeding that will not stop after 5 minutes of pressure.
  - You may be at an increased risk of having a blood clot. Seek immediate medical attention if you have sudden swelling in an arm or leg, chest pain, or trouble breathing.
  - Your heart may have to work harder to pump blood to the rest of your body. Notify your care team if you are having shortness of breath or chest pain.
  - There is a small risk of developing a second cancer years or months after treatment. Talk to your provider about this risk.
  - Your blood sugar levels may be higher. Your care provider may have you regularly check your blood sugar. Contact your care team if you are urinating more than normal, are very thirsty, are more tired than normal, or are having trouble keeping your blood sugar within a desired range.
  - Severe skin reactions can occur, including Stevens-Johnson syndrome, which can be life-threatening. Seek emergency care if you have a severe rash or a rash on your mouth, eyes, or genitals.

If you experience ANY uncontrolled side effect, call your physician or healthcare center immediately:

(INSTITUTIONAL CONTACT INFO)

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### Handling body fluids and waste

Trametinib remains in your body for several days after it is taken, so some of the drug may be present in urine, stool, sweat, or vomit. Once you have started to take trametinib, it is important to follow the instructions below every day for as long as your treatment lasts. This will keep yourself, loved ones, and the environment as safe as possible.

- Pregnant women should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- Toilet and septic systems
  - You may use the same toilet, septic tank, and/or sewer that you usually use. If you have a low-flow toilet, close the lid and flush twice to ensure all waste has been discarded.
  - If the toilet or toilet seat becomes soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surfaces before other people use the toilet.
  - Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet.
- If you need a bedpan, be sure your caregiver knows to wear gloves to assist with cleanup and to wash the bedpan with soap and water every day.
- If you do not have good control of bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb body waste.
- Wash any skin that has been exposed to body waste or trametinib with soap and water.
- Linens or clothing that are soiled with body fluids or body waste should be washed separately from other linens and clothing. If you do not have a washer, place the soiled linens in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- Wash hands with soap and water after touching linens or clothing that may be soiled with body fluids.

### Pregnancy, sexual activity, and contraception

- Women should not become pregnant and men should not get a partner pregnant while taking trametinib. Men and women of childbearing age and potential should use effective contraception during therapy and for a minimum of 4 months after the last dose of trametinib.
- Do not breastfeed while taking trametinib and for 4 months after the last dose of trametinib.
- Inform your care provider if you become pregnant.
- It is safe to hug and kiss. Special precautions may be needed for sexual activity while on oral chemotherapy, and you are encouraged to ask your care provider.

### Obtaining medication

Talk with your care provider about how to obtain your trametinib.

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## TRAMETINIB

### Additional resources

**Product website:** <https://www.us.tafinlarmekinist.com>

**Product prescribing information:** <https://www.novartis.us/sites/www.novartis.us/files/mekinist.pdf>

**Product resources:**

<https://www.us.tafinlarmekinist.com/metastatic-nsclc/patient-support/financial-cost-support/>

**Updated — January 24, 2024**

### Additional instructions

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**Important notice:** The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), National Community Oncology Dispensing Association, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources. This guide does not cover all existing information related to the possible uses, directions, doses, precautions, warnings, interactions, adverse effects, or risks associated with this medication and should not substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Provision of this guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of this medication by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. The collaborators are not making any representations with respect to the medications whatsoever, and any and all decisions, with respect to such medications, are at the sole risk of the individual consuming the medication. All decisions related to taking this medication should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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