



## AXITINIB

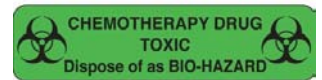
### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PHARMACIST

#### Prescription

- All orders written on a **pre-printed order** with a Cancer Care Nova Scotia logo (bottom left corner)
  - The order must be signed by the prescriber (at the bottom) AND SHOULD be signed by at least one other oncology health professional (nurse or hospital pharmacist) who has verified the order
- The prescription may **not** be refilled (unless specifically ordered by the oncologist) and it may **not** be filled as a continuing care prescription
  - If the prescriber has written for refills, do **not** dispense until the oncology team authorizes the refill.
  - Blood work must be checked for each cycle.
- **Always check for drug-drug interactions, especially before the first cycle. There is a strong potential for Axitinib to interact with other drugs, foods or natural health products**, so a thorough drug interaction check (including medications filled at different pharmacies) is recommended before dispensing the first dose of Enzalutamide and after each new drug is considered for concomitant use. Consult the **Drug Interactions Table**, in this Toolkit.

#### Handling and Dispensing

- When handling this drug, disposable gloves should be worn at all times by any woman of child-bearing potential. Counting trays and other equipment directly exposed to the drug should be cleaned with **soap and water**, followed by rinsing with copious amounts of water (wear gloves).
- Do not crush tablets in an open air environment and risk inhalation of powder.
- ALWAYS affix the auxiliary label to identify this medication as “Cancer Chemotherapy”- this is an important warning label for other health professionals caring for the patient.



#### Patient Counseling and Follow-up

- Counsel the patient, including the key messages listed below. Use the **Initial Assessment and Patient Counseling Visit- Pharmacist Guide ①** and the **Medication Info Sheet ②** for this drug. Be sure that you know the specific treatment schedule and that this is clearly communicated to the patient.
- Call the patient within the first week to identify any problems with adverse reactions or adherence.
  - When speaking with the patient and during call backs, ask the patient to identify any problems with medication adherence. Use the **First Follow-Up Call/Visit- Pharmacist Guide ①**.
- Continuing follow up calls between clinic visits are necessary for ADR identification and prevention and for adherence management. Contact the oncology clinic nurse or hospital pharmacist to negotiate who will do follow-up calls between clinic visits. Tell the patient that you plan to call back to check on their progress. Consider the suggested call-back schedule (pg. 2), with specific questions for each contact.
  - When speaking with the patient and during call backs, ask the patient to identify any problems with medication adherence. Use the **Continuing Follow-Up Calls/Visits - Pharmacist Guide ①**.
- If the patient reports any adverse effects, consider the management strategies suggested in the **Adverse Drug Reaction Management Guide ②**.
- ALWAYS document your findings in the patient profile of your pharmacy computer system
- ALWAYS contact the patient’s cancer care team of any findings and actions you have taken.
- ALWAYS **watch for any unusual or unexpected symptoms or problems** (such as an adverse reaction that appears too soon or too severe) and contact the cancer care team promptly if something seems wrong with the patient experience.



## CLINICAL INDICATIONS



Axitinib is clinically indicated for:      Advanced Renal Cell Carcinoma

## DRUG ADMINISTRATION

- Axitinib is generally taken **twice daily**, with or without food.
- Patients should not eat grapefruits or drink grapefruit juice while taking Axitinib.
- Swallow whole tablets with water- Do not crush or chew.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- If a dose is missed, do not take a double dose the next day to make up for it.

## PATIENT COUNSELLING- INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP CALLS

- In addition to other printed materials, use the **Medication Info Sheet** from the Cancer Care Nova Scotia website, and consider the more detailed suggestions in this toolkit.

	Key Messages
<b>Initial counselling- At time of dispensing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to take the medication properly</li> <li>• Symptoms to watch for reduced thyroid function</li> <li>• When to call back to the cancer care team for urgent care</li> <li>• Use the <b>Initial Assessment and Patient Counseling Visit- Pharmacist Guide ❶</b> and the drug-specific <b>Medication Info Sheet ❷</b></li> </ul>
<b>First call-back – Within first week:</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify any initial problems with understanding or adherence</li> <li>• Use the <b>First Follow-Up Call/Visit- Pharmacist Guide ❶</b> and the <b>Medication Info Sheet ❷</b> (if needed)</li> <li>• Reinforce initial key messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How and when treatment is taken</li> <li>○ Barriers to adherence- remembering to take medication; reluctance to take treatment; financial issues; nausea, vomiting or other adverse effects; trouble with packaging; felt better off medication; other concerns</li> <li>○ Suggest strategies to ensure adherence; reminder that full dose is needed for cancer control- partial doses may be ineffective.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Management of diarrhea- ensure patient has some Loperamide at home</li> <li>• Identify any early adverse effect symptoms; suggest management strategies</li> </ul>
<b>End of Treatment call-back – (telephone or return visit to Pharmacy)</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask if there are any pills left over and, if so, <b>PROBE</b> to determine any barriers to treatment adherence (see above)</li> <li>• Identify any adverse effects (<b>PROBE</b> for evidence of diarrhea; hemorrhagic events; nausea or vomiting; fatigue, asthenia; jaundice; symptoms of hypothyroidism, thrombosis, hypertension)</li> <li>• Use the <b>Continuing Follow-Up Calls/Visits- Pharmacist Guide ❶</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If any identified, contact oncologist or oncology nurse</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reinforce initial key messages</li> </ul>
<b>Subsequent cycles- (at least one call during each cycle:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate with patient and cancer care team for ongoing needs for counseling and timely follow up calls</li> <li>• Use the <b>Continuing Follow-Up Calls/Visits- Pharmacist Guide ❶</b></li> <li>• Adherence assessment and support is an important issue for reinforcement at each visit and mid-cycle call-back as treatment continues</li> </ul>


## ADVERSE EFFECTS: PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS

If you identify any of the following, you should contact the oncologist and tell the patient to call the oncologist or go directly to the Emergency Department of the nearest hospital right away **↗**:

- Liver problems (jaundice, dark urine, weight loss, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, upper right abdominal discomfort)
- High blood pressure, uncontrolled
- Gastrointestinal fistula or perforation (blood in stool, severe stomach pain)
- Blood clots (severe pain, swelling, or redness in legs or severe chest pain with shortness of breath)
- Heart problems (shortness of breath, fatigue, swollen feet and ankles)
- Hemorrhage (stroke, coughing up blood, blood in stool)
- RPLS (Reversible Posterior Leukoencephalopathy Syndrome)- headache, seizure, lethargy, confusion, blindness and other visual and neurologic disturbances

**NOTE- Thyroid function:** Axitinib can affect thyroid function as early as 2 weeks after therapy begins. Contact the cancer care team to arrange thyroid function testing if the patient reports any symptoms. The following are the common adverse effects from Axitinib.

<b>More common</b>	<b>Less Common</b>
<p><u>Cardiovascular disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypertension <b>↗</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gastrointestinal disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of appetite <b>★</b>, nausea <b>★</b>, vomiting <b>★</b>, diarrhea <b>★</b>, constipation <b>★</b></li> <li>• Hepatotoxicity <b>↗</b></li> </ul> <p><u>General disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue <b>★</b>, headache <b>★</b>, weakness <b>★</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Metabolic disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypothyroidism <b>↗</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Skin disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand-foot skin reaction <b>★</b></li> </ul>	<p><u>Blood disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hemorrhage <b>↗</b> - blood in urine, nose bleeds, spitting up blood, blood in stool</li> </ul> <p><u>Gastrointestinal disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gastrointestinal fistula or perforation <b>↗</b></li> <li>• Abdominal pain <b>★</b></li> </ul> <p><u>General disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wound healing complications <b>◆</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Kidney disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proteinuria <b>◆</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Neurological disorders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPLS (Reversible Posterior Leukoencephalopathy Syndrome)- headache, seizure, lethargy, confusion, blindness and other visual and neurologic disturbances <b>↗</b></li> </ul>

**★** For detailed recommendations on the management of these adverse drug reactions, see the **Adverse Drug Reaction Management Guide** 

**◆** For management of these symptoms, the patient should see his physician

**↗** These symptoms require urgent attention- advise the patient to go to the Emergency Department or contact their doctor (see instructions above)

## DRUG INTERACTIONS

Take a **thorough medication history** (call other pharmacies if necessary) and determine the potential for all other drugs to increase or decrease Axitinib plasma concentration.

- Drug interactions are often missed by community pharmacy computer systems
- **REPORT any potential interaction** to the prescribing oncologist- either the Axitinib or the interaction drug may need to be dose altered or discontinued.



### LIST OF IMPORTANT DRUG-DRUG INTERACTIONS WITH AXITINIB- *This is not a complete list*

Axitinib is metabolized primarily in the CYP3A4 pathway in the liver. Significant interactions are possible with other drugs that affect the same metabolic pathway.

- **Strong CYP 3A4 inducer** medications (e.g., dexamethasone, phenytoin, carbamazepine, rifampin, rifabutin, rifapentin, phenobarbital or St. John's Wort): consider an alternate concomitant medication with no or minimal enzyme induction potential or avoid axitinib (may decrease Axitinib plasma concentrations)
- **Moderate CYP 3A4/5 inducer** medications (e.g., bosentan, efavirenz, etravirine, modafinil, nafcillin): consider an alternate concomitant medication with no or minimal enzyme induction potential or avoid axitinib (may decrease Axitinib plasma concentrations)
- **CYP 3A4 inhibitor** medications (e.g., ketoconazole, itraconazole, grapefruit juice, ritonavir, erythromycin, clarithromycin): consider dose reduction of Axitinib if co-administered with a strong CYP3A4 inhibitor (may increase Axitinib plasma concentrations)

It is strongly recommended that you check any concurrent medications for interactions with this oral chemotherapy agent. Try one of the following comprehensive programs for checking drug interactions.

<p><b>Online Programs for Drug Interaction Checking-Publicly available:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.drugs.com/drug_interactions.php">http://www.drugs.com/drug_interactions.php</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://reference.medscape.com/drug-interactionchecker">http://reference.medscape.com/drug-interactionchecker</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.healthline.com/druginteractions">http://www.healthline.com/druginteractions</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://cpref.goldstandard.com/inter.asp?r=8084">http://cpref.goldstandard.com/inter.asp?r=8084</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://umm.edu/health/medical/drug-interaction-tool">http://umm.edu/health/medical/drug-interaction-tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://online.epocrates.com/">http://online.epocrates.com/</a> (free account required)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Interaction Checkers- Subscription required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lexicomp</li> <li>• Micromedex</li> <li>• eCPS</li> </ul>
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