

Sunitinib

Sutent®

Cancer-directed targeted therapy in capsules

Understanding your treatment

What is targeted therapy?

This treatment targets specific molecules, which are inside or on the surface of cancer cells. By targeting cancer cells, the targeted therapy limits damage to healthy cells. This type of treatment can be used alone or in combination with other treatments such as chemotherapy.

How can a targeted therapy help you?

Depending on your type of cancer and the stage of the disease, a targeted therapy can be used to :

- **Destroy** cancer cells
- **Stop** the cancer from spreading
- **Slow** the growth of cancer cells

How will you feel while on a targeted therapy?

Even though those treatments target cancer cells and limit damage to healthy cells, side effects can still arise.

Not everyone has side effects and each person's experience may differ. Side effects and their severity are not representative of the treatment's effect or lack thereof.

This document presents the most frequent side effects that your targeted therapy causes.

Medication

Sunitinib

Capsules to take by mouth

Administration

Capsules to be taken once a day for 28 days followed by 14 days rest.

Take with or without food

One cycle lasts 6 weeks and is composed of 4 weeks of treatment followed by 2 weeks of rest.



A **blood test** will be done prior to every treatment cycle. Depending on the results and side effects of the previous treatment, the dose of the medication might be adjusted or the treatment might be delayed.

How to take your medication?

- Take your sunitinib capsules as prescribed once a day to the same time every day during 28 days, followed by 14 days rest. You may take your capsules with or without food with a large glass of water or juice. If you have difficulty tolerating it, for example, if it causes a stomach ache, take it while you eat.
- Capsules must be taken whole. Do not open the capsules.
- **If you forget a dose**, you may take it as soon as you remember but do not double your next dose. Try, however, to take your capsules at the same time every day and in the same way (either with or without food).

Storing and handling your medicines



- Wash your hands immediately after handling your capsules.
- Keep your medication at room temperature, out of the reach of children and pets as well as protected from light, heat or moisture. Do not keep medicines in the bathroom.
- Don't throw away unused medication at home. Bring it back to your pharmacy to be destroyed safely. You may dispose of the empty containers in your home garbage can.
- If the capsules inadvertently come in contact with the surrounding surface, wash and rub the surface with water and soap.
- Caregivers should wear disposable gloves if they prepare medication for you. You can find disposable gloves at your local community pharmacy.
- Keep your medications in their original container and do not mix them with other drugs.

How can this treatment affect your daily life?

Appetite

- Your **appetite may diminish**. Eat more often, in smaller quantities.
- Your **sense of taste may be altered**. Enhance foods with fines herbes or lemon juice. Eating fruits and unsweetened candies, chewing non-sugared gums, etc., may mask the metallic taste.
- **Alcohol** in small quantities is allowed and will not affect the efficacy of the treatments.

Sex life and birth control

- You can have an **active sexual** life during your treatments. However, a decrease in your sexual drive may occur during this period. This may also be influenced by different factors (fatigue, stress, etc.).



- It's safe to kiss, to touch, to hold hands, to sleep in the same bed and to cuddle.
- The effect of the drug on male or female fertility is unknown. This medication may have an effect on the menstrual cycle as well as spermatozoid production. However, this does not prevent erection or sexual activity and as such, you can have an active sexual life during your treatments. Pregnancy is possible and this medication could be harmful to the fetus. The use of an effective method of contraception is highly recommended for both men and women while on treatment. Breast-feeding is contraindicated during treatment.

Foods and medicines to avoid



- **Grapefruit**

You must avoid consuming grapefruit, Seville orange, starfruit, pomelo, pomegranate or foods containing them. The consumption of those foods could increase the side effects of sunitinib.

Tips and precautions



- **Sit down to urinate and fold down the toilet lid**

Women as well as men should sit down to urinate and fold down the toilet lid before flushing in order to avoid splashing. Flush twice to make sure everything has been flushed away. Follow these precautions during your treatments and up to 48 hours after (or according to instructions from your cancer center).

- **Bodily fluids**

The treatment you're receiving stays in your body for a few days. During that period, it's possible that a certain quantity is found in some bodily fluids or secretions that you produce, such as urine, stools, vomit, sperm and vaginal discharge. In order to protect the environment and those living with you, follow the instructions given by your cancer center about the right way to handle and dispose of the bodily fluids.



- **Over the counter medicines, natural health products and vaccines**

Consult your healthcare team:

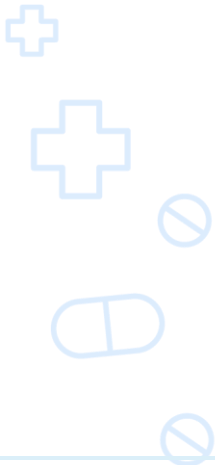
- if you intend to take any other medication (with or without a prescription) or natural health products.
- if you need to receive a vaccine.

This could decrease your treatment's efficacy or increase its side effects.

- **Always have on hand the complete list of your medications**

Be sure to always have on hand the complete list of your medications, dietary supplements, vitamins and other natural health products. Give it to your doctor and your pharmacist. It is important to make them aware of any change.

- Notify your doctor that you are receiving sunitinib should you have to undergo surgery while on treatment.



What are the side effects of your treatment?

This fact sheet aims to let you know the side effects most commonly seen following the administration of your treatment. Please note that when you take any medication, there is a possibility that it causes rare side effects and it is difficult to predict which patients will be affected.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

MANAGEMENT

Decrease in white blood cells

A decrease in the **white blood cells** will occur during your treatment. You may be at higher risk of infections during this period.

- Wash your hands often.
- During this period, avoid coming in contact with people who have contagious diseases.
- Contact a member of your healthcare team quickly if you notice any signs of infection (chills, cough, sore throat, pain while you urinate, etc.)
- In case of fever, do not take acetaminophen (Ex: Tylenol®, Atasol®) and anti-inflammatory medication (Ex: Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®).

❌ **Stop your treatment and go to the Emergency Room if:**

- you have a fever of 38,3 °C (101°F) or above
- or
- you have a fever of 38 °C (100,4 °F) twice an hour apart.

Decrease in platelets

A decrease in platelets will occur during treatment. You may bruise or bleed more easily than you normally do.

- Use a tooth brush with soft bristles.
- Consult your pharmacist before taking over the counter medications containing Aspirin® or other anti-inflammatory medication (e.g. Advil®, Motrin®, Aleve®, etc.).
- Contact a member of your healthcare team if you bruise more easily than you normally do or if you have a tendency to bleed easily from the nose or the gums.

Diarrhea

You may sometimes experience diarrhea.

- Drink lots of liquids (8 to 10 glasses a day) unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.
- Eat and drink often but in small quantities.

- ✔ **Continue your treatment if:** you have light diarrhea (2 to 3 additional loose stools per day compared to usual before starting your treatment). Start loperamide (Imodium®) by taking 2 tablets first followed by one tablet after each loose stool for a maximum of 8 tablets per 24 hours period. Contact a member of your healthcare team if the diarrhea does not improve after taking loperamide for 24 hours.

- ⚠ **Continue your treatment and call your healthcare team as**

soon as possible if: you experience more than 4 to 6 additional loose stools per day compared to usual before starting your treatment. Start loperamide (Imodium®) by taking 2 tablets first followed by one tablet after each loose stool for a maximum of 8 tablets per 24 hours period.

- ➖ **Stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible or go to the Emergency Room if:** you have 7 or more additional loose stools per day compared to usual before starting your treatment, if you are not able to hold it in (incontinence) or if you have diarrhea with a fever.

Fatigue

Fatigue with or without dizziness and weakness may occur during your treatments. It is usually temporary and may be related to many factors (medication, stress, disease, anemia, dehydration, ...)

- Maintain a good level of activity but rest when you feel the need to.

Nausea

Nausea, usually light may occur during your treatment.

- You will be prescribed medication to be taken as needed if you have nausea.
 - ✔ **Continue your treatment if:** you have light nausea that does not prevent you entirely from eating. Make sure to continue your medication prescribed for your nausea.
 - ⚠ **Continue your treatment and call your healthcare team as soon as possible if:** you have significant nausea, experience vomiting that is partially preventing you from eating. Make sure to continue your medication prescribed for your nausea.
 - ➖ **Stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible or go to the Emergency Room if:** you have severe nausea or repeated vomiting that prevents you completely from eating.
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ADVERSE EFFECTS

MANAGEMENT

Ulcers in the mouth

Ulcers in the mouth may appear approximately 7 to 10 days following the start of your treatment. These ulcers can also appear in the throat.

- Gently and regularly brush your teeth after each meal and at bedtime.
- To prevent this effect, rinse your mouth with a solution of water and salt with or without baking soda or mouthwash without alcohol found in stores. Gargle 4 times a day – after every meal and at bedtime. Do not drink or eat for one hour after you gargle.
- ✔ **Continue your treatment if:** you have mild discomfort (ulcer, sensitivity, redness, irritation) that does not prevent you from eating. Continue your mouthwash.
- ⚠ **Continue your treatment and call your healthcare team as soon as possible if:** you have moderate discomfort (redness and painful lesions) that prevents you from eating, but not completely. Continue your mouthwash.
- ✖ **Stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible or go to the Emergency Room if:** you have severe discomfort and pain that is bothersome enough that it prevents you almost completely from eating.

Hand and foot problems

Hand and foot syndrome may appear during your treatment. You may experience numbness, tingling, swelling, redness on the palms of your hands and underneath your feet. Pain, blisters, peeling of the skin may accompany these symptoms.

To prevent this syndrome:

- Avoid wearing tight clothes or shoes. Wear absorbent sponge rubber soles, and/or gel pads to relieve pressure points.
- Pat dry your hands and feet rather than rubbing them.
- Wear light clothing or keep skin free of clothing to avoid perspiring.
- Wear rubber gloves while washing dishes.
- Wash your hands and feet in lukewarm water; avoid hot water.
- Moisturize your skin regularly using a non-perfumed emollient and thick cream.
- Avoid activities that require applying pressure and repetitive friction on your hands and feet.

If symptoms occur:

- ✔ **Continue your treatment but contact your healthcare team if:** you have numbness, redness, or tingling on your hands and feet, but it's not painful.
- ⚠ **Continue your treatment and call your healthcare team as soon as possible if:** you have redness, swelling or peeling of

the skin with pain to the hands and feet, but it does not prevent you from doing your daily activities.

- ➖ **Stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible or go to the Emergency Room if:** you have redness, swelling and lesions (ulcers) to the hands and feet with pain, and if it prevents you from doing your daily activities.

High blood pressure

High blood pressure might occur.

- Your blood pressure might be checked during your visit with your doctor.
- A member of your healthcare team might ask you to measure your blood pressure regularly and record it in a diary.
- If you experience high blood pressure, medications can be prescribed to control it.
- ✔ **Continue your treatment if:** your resting blood pressure is below 140/90 mmHg.
- ⚠ **Continue your treatment and call your healthcare team as soon as possible if:** your blood pressure is above 140/90 mmHg over a short period of time or less than 24 hours.
- ➖ **Stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible if:** your blood pressure is above 160/100 mmHg all or most of the time. **Head to the Emergency Room** if your blood pressure is above 200/120 mmHg or if you have a headache or are confused.

Hair loss

Usually there is **no hair loss** with this treatment. However, you may notice a **discoloration of your hair** which may become grey or white. This may happen after 5 or 6 weeks of treatment.

- Don't worry, the look of your hair will go back to normal after stopping the medication.

Skin coloration

Your skin may become yellowish during your treatment. Your skin may also become dryer. Redness and itchiness may develop.

- Use a non perfumed moisturizing cream as needed.
- Don't worry, the look of your skin will go back to normal after stopping the medication.

RARE ADVERSE EFFECTS THAT CAN BE SEVERE OR SERIOUS

If the following side effects occur, stop your treatment and call your healthcare team as quickly as possible or go to the Emergency Room:

- Pain in your calf or leg with local skin warmth and redness or sudden difficulty breathing
- Irregular or fast heartbeats

PHARMACIST : _____

PHONE : _____

FROM ____ H__ TO ____ H__ (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)

This fact sheet has been prepared by a sub-committee of the Comité national de l'évolution de la pratique des soins pharmaceutiques of the Programme québécois de cancérologie of the Ministry of Health and Social Services in consultation with the Comité de l'évolution de la pratique en oncologie of the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux.

DEVELOPED MARCH 2009 | REVISED NOVEMBER 2019



Treatment Diary | Sunitinib 42 days (28 days of treatment followed by 14 days off)

CYCLE START DATE :

LEGEND

- ✔ Continue your treatment.
- ⚠ Continue your treatment and contact your healthcare team as soon as possible.
- ✖ Stop your treatment and contact your healthcare team without delay or go to the Emergency Room.

Refer to the information sheet for more details

DAYS OF TREATMENT

(Record the dose taken)

mg

Date (dd-mm)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42 (rest)
DECREASE IN WHITE BLOOD CELLS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
✖ You have a fever of 38,3°C (101°F) or above or you have a fever of 38°C (100,4°F) twice an hour apart with or without symptoms of infection.																													
DIARRHEA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
✔ Light diarrhea: you have 2 to 3 additional loose stools per day compared to usual.																													
⚠ Moderate diarrhea: you have 4 to 6 additional loose stools per day compared to usual.																													
✖ Severe diarrhea: you have 7 or more additional loose stools per day compared to usual before starting your treatment or you are not able to hold it in (incontinence).																													

NAUSEA AND VOMITING		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
	Light nausea that does not prevent you entirely from eating.																													
	Significant nausea or if you experience vomiting that is partially preventing you from eating.																													
	Severe nausea or repeated vomiting that prevents you completely from eating.																													
ULCERS IN THE MOUTH		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
	Mild discomfort (ulcer, sensitivity, redness, irritation) that does not prevent you from eating.																													
	Moderate discomfort (redness and painful lesions) that prevents you from eating, but not completely.																													
	Severe discomfort and pain that is bothersome enough that it prevents you almost completely from eating																													
HAND AND FOOT PROBLEMS		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
	Numbness, redness, or tingling on your hands and feet, but it's not painful.																													
	Redness, swelling or peeling of the skin with pain to the hands and feet, but it does not prevent you from doing your daily activities.																													
	Redness, swelling and lesions (ulcers) to the hands and feet with pain, and if it prevents you from doing your daily activities.																													

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29 to 42
	Resting blood pressure below 140/90 mmHg.																													
	Blood pressure above 140/90 mmHg over a short period of time or less than 24 hours.																													
	Blood pressure above 160/100 mmHg all or most of the time over a period of 24 hours.																													