

# Abemaciclib - Fulvestrant

Verzenio® - Faslodex®

Abemaciclib: Cancer-directed **targeted therapy** in tablets

Fulvestrant: Cancer-directed **hormonal therapy** injected into a muscle

## 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.

What is a hormonal therapy?

Hormonal therapy slows the growth of cancers that use natural hormones (for example: estrogen, progesterone and testosterone) to grow. Hormonal therapy can either stop the body from producing the hormones that cause cancer growth or it may prevent the use of the hormones by the cancer cells.

How can your treatment help you?

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

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

How will you feel?

Not everyone has side effects and each person's experience may be different. Side effects and their severity are not representative of therapy's effectiveness or lack thereof.

This document is about the most frequent side effects caused by your treatment.

### Medication

#### Abemaciclib

Tablets to take by mouth

#### Fulvestrant

Injection into a muscle

### Administration

To be taken twice a day with or without food

**On a continuous basis**

Days 1, 14 and 28 (for the first month) and every 28 days thereafter



- **Blood tests** will be done regularly. Depending on the results and the side effects, the dose of abemaciclib might be adjusted or the treatment might be delayed.
- Some tests might be done to verify the health of your **bones**. Fulvestrant could increase the risk of developing osteoporosis and fractures. You could be prescribed vitamin D and calcium in order to maintain your bones in good condition. It is important that you eat calcium-rich foods (yogurt, cheese, milk, etc.).

## How to take your medication?

### Abemaciclib:

- Take your abemaciclib tablets as prescribed twice a day, at the same time every day with or without food. If you have difficulty tolerating them, for example if they cause a stomach ache, take them while you eat. You must take your tablets on a continuous basis.
- Tablets must be taken whole. Do not chew, split or crush the tablets.
- **If you forget a dose** of abemaciclib, do not take an extra dose. You should only take the next scheduled dose and then go back to your regular schedule. However, try to take your pills at the same time every day and in the same way (either with or without food).

### Fulvestrant:

- This medication is usually administered by a nurse or a physician into a buttock muscle.

## Storing and handling your medicines



- Wash your hands immediately after handling your tablets.
- Keep your medication out of the reach of children and pets.
- Keep your abemaciclib tablets at room temperature, well as protected from light, heat or moisture. Do not keep medicines in the bathroom.
- Keep your fulvestrant syringes in their original container, in the fridge and protected from light.
- 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.
- For abemaciclib, if it inadvertently comes 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. The container should never be reused to put other objects or food.



# How can this treatment affect your daily life?

## Fatigue and appetite



- You may experience **fatigue** during your treatments. This is usually temporary and may be related to different reasons (medication, stress, the disease). Maintain a good level of activity but rest when you feel the need to.
- 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.
- It is usually not necessary for **women** to use contraception while on this treatment as it typically given to menopausal women. However, this medication could be harmful to a fetus should a pregnancy occur.

## 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 abemaciclib.



- Fulvestrant works by decreasing the quantity of **estrogen** in your blood. It is therefore important to avoid taking products containing hormones to treat menopausal symptoms like hot flashes, vaginal dryness, etc. Some natural remedies also contain ingredients that have hormone-like effects. If you are considering taking such products, consult your pharmacist who will evaluate if it is safe for you to use them.

## Tips and precautions



- **Sit down to urinate and fold down the toilet lid**  
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 (or according to instructions from your cancer center).
- **Bodily fluids**  
During the treatment period, it's possible that a certain quantity of the medication 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.



# 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

### Diarrhea

You may sometimes experience diarrhea, which may start approximately 7 days after the beginning of your treatment.

## MANAGEMENT

- 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:** your stools are softer than usual or 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-hour 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 at first followed by one tablet after each loose stool for a maximum of 8 tablets per 24-hour period.
- ⊖ **Stop abemaciclib 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.

### Decrease in white blood cells

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

- Wash your hands often.
- During this period, avoid coming into 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 abemaciclib 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.

## ADVERSE EFFECTS

## MANAGEMENT

### Nausea

Nausea and vomiting, usually light to moderate, may occur with abemaciclib.

- 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 abemaciclib 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.

### Abdominal pain

Abdominal pain can occur.

- If this happens and is bothering you, contact a member of your healthcare team.

### Headaches

You may experience headaches.

- If this happens and is bothering you, talk to a member of your healthcare team who will recommend a medication for pain.

### Hair loss

Depending on the individual, thinning of the hair may occur. However, don't worry; your hair will grow back after treatments have ended.

- Use gentle shampoo.
- In order to slow hair loss, avoid brushing hair vigorously.
- Avoid hair spray, dyes and perms.

### Hot flashes

You may experience hot flashes. These effects vary between individuals and usually go away with time.

- Do not forget to consult your pharmacist before taking natural remedies; they could decrease the efficacy of your treatment.
- If these symptoms persist over time or are bothering you, speak with your healthcare team that will recommend appropriate measures.

### Vaginal dryness

You may experience itchiness or vaginal dryness.

- If this is bothering you, consult your pharmacist who could recommend some creams.



## ADVERSE EFFECTS

## MANAGEMENT

### Reaction at the injection site

During your treatment, you may experience some redness, pain, tenderness, irritation, swelling or a reaction at the injection site.

- Apply lukewarm compresses on the injection site for 15 to 20 minutes a few times a day.
- If you notice one or more of these effects and if they persist despite applying compresses, contact a member of your healthcare team.

## 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:**

- Sensitivity or swelling of the ankles or calves
- Chest pain
- Sudden difficulty breathing

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 NOVEMBER 2019



## Treatment Diary | Abemaciclib + Fulvestrant 28 days

START CYCLE DATE :




### LEGEND

- ✓ Continue your treatment.
- ⚠ Continue your treatment and contact your healthcare team as soon as possible.
- ✗ Stop **abemaciclib** and contact your healthcare team without delay or go to the Emergency Room.

Refer to the information sheet for more details.

		TREATMENT																											
		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
(Record the dose taken)	Abemaciclib : <b>mg</b>																												
	Fulvestrant : (*for the first month only)														*														
Date (dd-mm)																													
<b>DIARRHEA</b>		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
✓	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).																												
<b>DECREASE IN WHITE BLOOD CELLS</b>		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
✗	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.																												



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
	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.																												