

ribociclib

Pronunciation: rye-boe-SYE-klib

Other Name(s): Kisqali™

Appearance: Tablet

This handout gives general information about this cancer medication.

You will learn:

- who to contact for help
- what the medication is
- how it is given
- what to expect while on medication



This handout was created by Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) together with patients and their caregivers who have also gone through cancer treatment. It is meant to help support you through your cancer treatment and answer some of your questions.

This information does not replace the advice of your health care team. Always talk to your health care team about your treatment.

Who do I contact if I have questions or need help?

My cancer health care provider is: _____

During the day I should contact: _____

Evenings, weekends and holidays: _____

What is this treatment for?

- For treating a certain type of breast cancer. Ribociclib is given together with another medication.

What should I do before I start this treatment?

Tell your health care team if you have or had significant medical condition(s), especially if you have / had:

- heart problems (including irregular heartbeat or heart rate),
- a family history of severe heart problems,
- low salt levels in your blood (such as low calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, or potassium),
- liver, kidney problems, or
- any allergies.



Remember To:

- ✓ Tell your health care team about all of the other medications you are taking.
- ✓ Keep taking other medications that have been prescribed for you, unless you have been told not to by your health care team.

You will have a blood test to check for hepatitis B before starting treatment. See the [Hepatitis B and Cancer Medications](#) pamphlet for more information.

How is this treatment given?

- This medication is usually taken once a day by mouth **for 21 days followed by a 7 day break** with no ribociclib treatment. Talk to your health care team about how and when to take your medication.
- Take the dose at about the same time each day, preferably in the morning.
- Swallow whole with a glass of water, with or without food.
- Do not crush, chew or split the tablets.
- If you miss a dose, skip this and take your next dose as you normally do. Do not take an extra dose to make up for the missed dose.
- If you vomit (throw up) after taking your medication, do not take an extra dose. Take your next dose at the normal time.

Warning: If you take too much of this medication by accident, or if you think a child or a pet may have swallowed your medication, you must call the Ontario Poison Control Center right away at: 1-800-268-9017.

DO this while on treatment

- ✓ DO check with your health care team before getting any vaccinations, surgery, dental work or other medical procedures.

DO NOT do this while on treatment

- ✗ DO NOT take any other medications, such as vitamins, over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs or substances, or natural health products without checking with your health care team.
- ✗ DO NOT start any complementary or alternative therapies, such as acupuncture or homeopathic products, without checking with your health care team.
- ✗ DO NOT use tobacco products (such as smoking cigarettes or vaping) or drink alcohol while on treatment without talking to your health care team first. Smoking and drinking can make side effects worse and make your treatment not work as well.
- ✗ DO NOT eat or drink grapefruit, starfruit, Seville oranges or their juices (or products that contain these) while on this treatment. These may increase the quantity of the medication in your blood and increase the side effects.
- ✗ DO NOT drive, operate machinery or do any tasks that need you to be alert if you feel faint.

Will this treatment interact with other medications or natural health products?

Yes, this medication can interact with other medications, vitamins, foods, traditional medicines and natural health products. Interactions can make this medication not work as well or cause severe side effects.

Tell your health care team about all of your:

- prescription and over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications
- other drugs and substances, such as cannabis/marijuana (medical or recreational)
- natural health products such as vitamins, herbal teas, homeopathic medicines, and other supplements, or traditional medicines

Check with your health care team before starting or stopping any of them.



Talk to your health care team **BEFORE** taking or using these :

- Anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (Advil[®] or Motrin[®]), naproxen (Aleve[®]) or Aspirin[®].
- Over-the-counter products such as dimenhydrinate (Gravol[®])
- Natural health products such as St. John's Wort
- Traditional medicines
- Supplements such as vitamin C
- Grapefruit juice
- Alcoholic drinks
- Tobacco
- All other drugs or substances, such as marijuana or cannabis (medical or recreational)

What to do if you feel unwell, have pain, a headache or a fever

- ✓ **Always** check your temperature to see if you have a fever **before** taking any medications for fever or pain (such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®)).
 - Fever can be a sign of infection that may need treatment right away.
 - If you take these medications before you check for fever, they may lower your temperature and you may not know you have an infection.

How to check for fever:

Keep a digital (electronic) thermometer at home and take your temperature if you feel hot or unwell (for example, chills, headache, mild pain).

- You have a fever if your temperature taken **in your mouth (oral temperature)** is:
 - 38.3°C (100.9°F) or higher at any time

OR

 - 38.0°C (100.4°F) or higher for at least one hour.



If you do have a fever :

- ✓ **Try to contact your health care team. If you are not able to talk to them for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away.**
- ✓ Ask your health care team for the [Fever](#) pamphlet for more information.

If you do not have a fever but have mild symptoms such as headache or mild pain:

- ✓ Ask your health care team about the right medication for you. **Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)** is a safe choice for most people.



Talk to your health care team before you start taking ibuprofen (Advil[®], Motrin[®]), naproxen (Aleve[®]) or ASA (Aspirin[®]), as they may increase your chance of bleeding or interact with your cancer treatment.



Talk to your health care team if you already take **low dose aspirin** for a medical condition (such as a heart problem). It may still be safe to take.

How will this treatment affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Talk to your health care team about:

- How this treatment may affect your sexual health
- How this treatment may affect your ability to have a baby, if this applies to you

This treatment may harm an unborn baby. Tell your health care team if you or your partner are pregnant, become pregnant during treatment, or are breastfeeding.

- If there is **any** chance of pregnancy happening, you and your partner together must use **2 effective forms of birth control** at the same time until at least **21 days** after your last treatment dose. Talk to your health care team about which birth control options are best for you.
- Do not use hormonal birth control (such as birth control pills), unless your health care team told you that they are safe. Talk to your health care team about the safest birth control for you.
- Do not breastfeed while on this treatment and for at least **21 days** after your last dose.

How to safely store and handle this medication

- Check with your pharmacist about whether you should store your ribociclib tablets at room temperature or in the refrigerator.
- Keep the tablets in the original packaging.
- Keep out of sight and reach of children and pets.
- Do not throw out any unused ribociclib tablets at home. Bring them to your pharmacy to be thrown away safely.

How to safely touch oral anti-cancer medication

If you are a patient:

- Wash your hands before and after touching your oral anti-cancer medication.
- Swallow each pill whole. Do not crush or chew your pills.

If you are a caregiver:

- Wear nitrile or latex gloves when touching tablets, capsules or liquids.
- Wash your hands before putting on your gloves and after taking them off, even if your skin did not touch the oral anti-cancer medication.
- Throw out your gloves after each use. Do not re-use gloves.
- Do not touch oral anti-cancer medications if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

What to do if anti-cancer medication gets on your skin or in your eyes

If medication gets on your skin:

- Wash your skin with a lot of soap and water.
- If your skin gets red or irritated, talk to your health care team.

If medication gets in your eyes:

- Rinse your eyes with running water right away. Keep water flowing over your open eyes for at least 15 minutes.

What are the side effects of this treatment?

The following table lists side effects that you may have when getting ribociclib. The table is set up to list the most common side effects first and the least common last. It is unlikely that you will have all of the side effects listed and you may have some that are not listed.

Read over the side effect table so that you know what to look for and when to get help. Refer to this table if you experience any side effects while on ribociclib.

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Low neutrophils (white blood cells) in the blood (neutropenia) (May be severe) When neutrophils are low, you are at risk of getting an infection more easily. Ask your health care team for the Neutropenia (Low white blood cell count) pamphlet for more information. What to look for? • If you feel hot or unwell (for example if you have chills or a new cough), you must check your temperature to see if you have a fever. • Do not take medications that treat a fever before you take your temperature (for example, Tylenol®, acetaminophen, Advil® or ibuprofen). • Do not eat or drink anything hot or cold right before taking your temperature. You have a fever if your temperature taken in your mouth (oral temperature) is: • 38.3°C (100.9°F) or higher at any time - OR • 38.0°C (100.4°F) or higher for at least one hour. What to do? If your health care team has told you that you have low neutrophils: • Wash your hands often to prevent infection. • Check with your health care team before getting any vaccines, surgeries, medical procedures or visiting your dentist. • Keep a digital thermometer at home so you can easily check for a fever. If you have a fever: If you have a fever, try to contact your health care team. If you are unable to talk to the team for advice, you must get emergency medical help right away.	If you have a fever, try to contact your health care team. If you are unable to talk to the team for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away.

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Low platelets in the blood (May be severe) When your platelets are low, you are at risk for bleeding and bruising. Ask your health care team for the Low Platelet Count pamphlet for more information. What to look for? • Watch for signs of bleeding: ◦ bleeding from your gums ◦ unusual or heavy nosebleeds ◦ bruising easily or more than normal ◦ black coloured stools (poo) or blood in your stools (poo) ◦ coughing up red or brown coloured mucus ◦ dizziness, constant headache or changes in your vision ◦ heavy vaginal bleeding ◦ red or pink coloured urine (pee) What to do? If your health care team has told you that you have low platelets: • Tell your pharmacist that your platelet count may be low before taking any prescriptions or over-the-counter medication. • Check with your healthcare team before you go to the dentist. • Take care of your mouth and use a soft toothbrush. • Try to prevent cuts and bruises. • Ask your health care team what activities are safe for you. • Your treatment may have to be delayed if you have low platelets. Your health care team may recommend a blood transfusion. If you have signs of bleeding: • If you have a small bleed, clean the area with soap and water or a saline (saltwater) rinse. Apply pressure for at least 10 minutes. If you have bleeding that does not stop or is severe (very heavy), you must get emergency medical help right away.	Talk to your health care team if you have any signs of bleeding. If you have bleeding that doesn't stop or is severe (very heavy), you MUST get emergency help right away.

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Nausea and vomiting (Generally mild) What to look for? • Nausea is feeling like you need to throw up. You may also feel light-headed. • You may feel nausea within hours to days after your treatment. What to do? To help prevent nausea: • It is easier to prevent nausea than to treat it once it happens. • Drink clear liquids and have small meals. Get fresh air and rest. • Do not eat spicy, fried foods or foods with a strong smell. • Limit caffeine (like coffee, tea) and avoid alcohol. If you have nausea or vomiting: • Take your rescue (as-needed) anti-nausea medication(s) as prescribed. • Ask your health care team for the Nausea & Vomiting pamphlet for more information. • Talk to your health care team if: ◦ nausea lasts more than 48 hours ◦ vomiting lasts more than 24 hours or if it is severe	Talk to your healthcare team if nausea lasts more than 48 hours or vomiting lasts more than 24 hours or if it is severe.

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Fatigue What to look for? • Feeling of tiredness or low energy that lasts a long time and does not go away with rest or sleep.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
What to do? • Be active. Aim to get 30 minutes of moderate exercise (you are able to talk comfortably while exercising) on most days. • Check with your health care team before starting any new exercise. • Pace yourself, do not rush. Put off less important activities. Rest when you need to. • Ask family or friends to help you with things like housework, shopping, and child or pet care. • Eat well and drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water or other liquids every day (unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less). • Avoid driving or using machinery if you are feeling tired. Ask your health care team for the Fatigue pamphlet for more information.	
Diarrhea What to look for? • Loose, watery, unformed stool (poo) that may happen days to weeks after you get your treatment. What to do? If you have diarrhea: • Take anti-diarrhea medication if your health care team prescribed it or told you to take it. • Do not eat foods or drinks with artificial sweetener (like chewing gum or 'diet' drinks), coffee and alcohol, until your diarrhea has stopped. • Eat many small meals and snacks instead of 2 or 3 large meals. • Drink at least 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day, unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. • Talk to your health care team if you can't drink 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day when you have diarrhea. You may need to drink special liquids with salt and sugar, called Oral Rehydration Therapy. • Talk to your health care team if your diarrhea does not improve after 24 hours of taking diarrhea medication or if you have diarrhea more than 7 times in one day. Ask your health care team for the Diarrhea pamphlet for more information.	Talk to your health care team if no improvement after 24 hours of taking diarrhea medication or if severe (more than 7 times in one day).

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Hair thinning or loss (Generally mild) What to look for? • Your hair may begin to become thin or fall out during or after treatment. • In most cases, your hair will grow back after treatment, but the texture or colour may change. • In very rare cases, hair loss may be permanent. What to do? • Use a gentle soft brush. • Do not use hair sprays, bleaches, dyes and perms.	Talk to your health care team if this bothers you.
Constipation What to look for? • Having bowel movements (going poo) less often than normal. • Small hard stools (poo) that look like pellets. • The need to push hard and strain to have any stool (poo) come out. • Stomach ache or cramps. • A bloated belly, feeling of fullness, or discomfort. • Leaking of watery stools (poo). • Lots of gas or burping. • Nausea or vomiting. What to do? To help prevent constipation: • Try to eat more fiber rich foods like fruits with skin, leafy greens and whole grains. • Drink at least 6 to 8 cups of liquids each day unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. • Be Active. Exercise can help to keep you regular. • If you take opioid pain medication, ask your health care team if eating more fibre is right for you.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Common Side Effects (25 to 49 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
To help treat constipation: If you have not had a bowel movement in 2 to 3 days you may need to take a laxative (medication to help you poo) to help you have regular bowel movements. Ask your health care team what to do. Ask your health care team for the Constipation Pamphlet for more information.	
Headache; mild joint, muscle pain or cramps What to look for? - A mild headache - New pain in your muscles or joints, muscle cramps, or feeling achy. What to do? - Take pain medication (acetaminophen or opioids such as codeine, morphine, hydromorphone, oxycodone) as prescribed. - Read the above section: "What to do if you feel unwell, have pain, a headache or a fever?" before taking acetaminophen (Tylenol®), ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®) or Aspirin. These medications may hide an infection that needs treatment or they may increase your risk of bleeding. - Rest often and try light exercise (such as walking) as it may help. Ask your health care team for the Pain pamphlet for more information.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Rash; dry, itchy skin (May be severe) What to look for? • You may have cracked, rough, flaking or peeling areas of the skin. • Your skin may look red and feel warm, like a sunburn. • Your skin may itch, burn, sting or feel very tender when touched. What to do? To prevent and treat dry skin: • Use fragrance-free skin moisturizer. • Protect your skin from the sun and the cold. • Use sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection and a SPF of at least 30. • Avoid perfumed products and lotions that contain alcohol. • Drink 6 to 8 cups of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated liquids each day, unless your health care team has told you to drink more or less. Rash may be severe in some rare cases and cause your skin to blister or peel. If this happens, get emergency medical help right away.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.
Liver problems (May be severe) Your health care team may check your liver function with a blood test. The liver changes do not usually cause any symptoms. What to look for? • Rarely, you may develop yellowish skin or eyes, unusually dark pee or pain on the right side of your belly. This may be severe. What to do? If you have any symptoms of liver problems, get emergency medical help right away.	Get emergency medical help right away.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Low appetite What to look for? • Loss of interest in food or not feeling hungry. • Weight loss. What to do? • Try to eat your favourite foods. • Eat small meals throughout the day. • You may need to take meal supplements to help keep your weight up. • Talk to your health care team if you have no appetite. Ask your health care team for the Loss of Appetite pamphlet for more information.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.
Mild swelling What to look for? • You may have mild swelling or puffiness in your arms and/or legs. Rarely, this may be severe. What to do? To help prevent swelling: • Eat a low-salt diet. If you have swelling: • Wear loose-fitting clothing. • For swollen legs or feet, keep your feet up when sitting.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Trouble Sleeping Your medications may cause trouble sleeping. It may get better once your body gets used to the medication or when your treatment ends. What to look for? - You may find it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep. - How well you sleep may change over your treatment. For example, you may have several nights of poor sleep followed by a night of better sleep. - You may wake up too early or not feel well-rested after a night's sleep. - You may feel tired or sleepy during the day. What to do? Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.
Cough and feeling short of breath (May be severe) What to look for? - You may have a cough and feel short of breath. - Symptoms that commonly occur with a cough are: - Wheezing or a whistling breathing - Runny nose - Sore throat - Heartburn - Weight loss - Fever and chills - Rarely this may be severe with chest pain, trouble breathing or coughing up blood. What to do? - Check your temperature to see if you have a fever. Read the above section "What to do if you feel unwell, have pain, a headache or a fever?". - If you have a fever, try to talk to your health care team. If you are not able to talk to them for advice, you MUST get emergency medical help right away. If you have a severe cough with chest pain, trouble breathing or you are coughing up blood, get medical help right away.	Talk to your health care team. If you are not able to talk to your health care team for advice, and you have a fever or severe symptoms, you MUST get emergency medical help right away.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Mouth sores What to look for? • Round, painful, white or gray sores inside your mouth that can occur on the tongue, lips, gums, or inside your cheeks. • In more severe cases they may make it hard to swallow, eat or brush your teeth. • They may last for 3 days or longer. What to do? To help prevent mouth sores: • Take care of your mouth by gently brushing and flossing regularly. • Rinse your mouth often with a homemade mouthwash. • To make a homemade mouthwash, mix 1 teaspoonful of baking soda and 1 teaspoonful of salt in 4 cups (1L) of water. • Do not use store-bought mouthwashes, especially those with alcohol, because they may irritate your mouth. If you have mouth sores: • Avoid hot, spicy, acidic, hard or crunchy foods. • Your doctor may prescribe a special mouthwash to relieve mouth sores and prevent infection. • Talk to your health care team as soon as you notice mouth or lip sores or if it hurts to eat, drink or swallow. Ask your health care team for the Oral Care (Mouth Care) pamphlet for more information.	Talk to your health care team as soon as you notice mouth or lip sores or if it hurts to eat, drink or swallow.
Dry mouth What to look for? • You may have a dry or sticky feeling in your mouth or throat, • Your saliva may be thick and stringy. • You may have cracks in your lips or at the corners of your mouth • You may have difficulty chewing, tasting, swallowing or talking	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
What to do? • Use sugar-free gum or lozenges (e.g. those that contain xylitol) to help keep your mouth moist. • Suck on ice chips or sugarless popsicles to help relieve dry mouth. • Rinse your mouth often (every 1 to 2 hours) with a homemade mouthwash. • To make a homemade mouthwash, mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda and 1 teaspoon of salt in 4 cups (1L) of water • Do not use store-bought mouthwashes, especially those with alcohol because they may irritate dry your mouth • Spray your mouth with water or artificial saliva products (e.g., Moi-Stir Spray®, Biotene® products) as needed to keep it moist. • Apply mouth lubricant (like Biotene Oral balance gel®) after you brush your teeth, at bedtime, and as needed. • Use a steam vaporizer at night to relieve nighttime dry mouth • Speak to your health care team about the right product for you. See our Mouth Care pamphlet for more information. Talk to your health care team if your dry mouth does not improve or if it is severe.	
Eye problems What to look for? • Your eyes may feel dry, irritated, or painful. • They may look red and have a lot of tears. • They may feel sensitive to light and your vision may be blurry. What to do? • Avoid wearing contact lenses. • Wear sunglasses with UV protection. • Use protective eyewear (goggles or helmet with face mask) when playing sports, mowing the lawn or doing anything that may get particles or fumes in your eyes. • You may try artificial tears (eye drops) or ointment.	Contact your health care team as soon as possible.

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Heartburn; stomach upset; bloating What to look for? • Pain or burning in the middle or top part of your chest. It may get worse when you are lying down or bending over or when you swallow. • A bitter or acidic taste in your mouth. What to do? • Drink clear liquids and eat small meals. • Do not eat acidic, fatty or spicy foods. • Limit caffeine (like coffee, tea) and avoid alcohol. • Avoid smoking or being around tobacco. • Sit up or stand after eating. Do not lie down. • Raise the head of your bed six to eight inches. You may need to use extra pillows to do this.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.
Taste changes What to look for? • Food and drinks may taste different than usual. What to do? • Eat foods that are easy to chew, such as scrambled eggs, pasta, soups, cooked vegetables. • Taste foods at different temperatures, since the flavour may change. • Try different forms of foods, like fresh, frozen or canned. • Experiment with non-spicy foods, spices and seasonings.	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe.

Other rare, but serious side effects are possible with this treatment.

If you have **any** of the following, talk to your cancer health care team or get emergency medical help right away:

- irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, chest pain, fainting spells or swelling in your legs, ankles and belly
- pain, swelling and hardening of the vein in an arm or leg
- muscle spasms, cramping, weakness, twitching, seizures, confusion or blood pressure changes

For more information on how to manage your symptoms ask your health care provider, or visit:

<https://www.cancercareontario.ca/symptoms>.

Notes

September 2025 Updated/Revised drug information sheet

The information set out in the medication information sheets, regimen information sheets, and symptom management information (for patients) contained in the Drug Formulary (the "Formulary") is intended to be used by health professionals and patients for informational purposes only. The information is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, drug interactions or side effects of a certain drug, nor should it be used to indicate that use of a particular drug is safe, appropriate or effective for a given condition.

A patient should always consult a healthcare provider if he/she has any questions regarding the information set out in the Formulary. The information in the Formulary is not intended to act as or replace medical advice and should not be relied upon in any such regard. All uses of the Formulary are subject to clinical judgment and actual prescribing patterns may not follow the information provided in the Formulary.