

Medication Information Sheet

ruxolitinib (RUX-oh-LI-ti-nib)

This document provides general information about your medication. It does not replace the advice of your health care professional. Always discuss your therapy with your health care professional and refer to the package insert for more details.

Other Name: Jakavi®

Appearance: tablet in various strengths and shapes

What is this medication for?

- For treating certain types of blood cancers (such as myelofibrosis or polycythemia vera) or symptoms related these cancers

What should I do before I have this medication?

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

- heart problems (such as low heart rate or abnormal heart rhythms),
- serious infections,
- kidney, liver problems, or
- any allergies.

Ruxolitinib tablets contain a small amount of lactose. If you cannot have lactose, talk to your health care team.

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 will this medication affect sex, pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Talk to your health care team about:

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

This medication 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 **6 months** after your last dose (general recommendation). Talk to your health care team about which birth control options are best for you.
- Do not breastfeed while on this medication and until **2 weeks** after your last dose.

How is this medication given?

- This medication is usually taken twice a day by mouth. Talk to your health care team about how and when to take your medication.
- Take tablets with a glass of water, with or without food.
- Do not crush, chew, or split the tablets.
- You may need a mix of tablets of different strengths to get the right dose. Make sure you **look at your tablets closely** so that you take the right dose.
- Do not eat or drink grapefruit, starfruit, Seville oranges or their juices (or products that contain these) while taking this drug. They may increase the amount of drug in your blood and increase side effects.
- If you vomit (throw up) after taking your medication, talk to your health care team about what to do.
- If you forget to take a dose of your medication, skip this dose and take the next dose as scheduled. Do not take extra (double up) to make up for the missed dose. Follow the instructions given to you or talk to your health care team if you are unsure about what to do.
- Your health care team will monitor your blood cell counts regularly to decide what the right dose is for you. They may ask you to stop taking this medication temporarily when your blood counts are too low.
- Make sure you understand your health care team's instructions and follow them carefully. Do not stop your medication unless you have been told to do so by your health care team.

- If you take too much of your oral anticancer 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.

What else do I need to know while on this medication?

- **Will this medication interact with other medications or natural health products?**
 - This medication can interact with other medications, vitamins, foods and natural health products. Interactions can make the treatment 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 and all other drugs, such as cannabis/marijuana (medical or recreational)
 - natural health products such as vitamins, herbal teas, homeopathic medicines, and other supplements
 - Check with your health care team before starting or stopping any of them.
- **What should I do if I 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.

What to DO while on this medication:

- DO check with your health care team before getting any vaccinations, surgery, dental work or other medical procedures.
- DO tell your health care team about any serious infections that you have now or have had in the past.
- DO talk to your health care team about your risk of getting other cancers after this treatment.

What NOT to DO while on this medication:

- DO NOT smoke 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 taking this drug. They may increase the amount of drug in your blood and increase side effects.

How should I safely store this medication?

- Keep this medication in the original packaging at room temperature in a dry place, away from heat and light. Keep out of sight and reach of children and pets.
- Do not throw out any unused medications at home. Bring them to your pharmacy to be thrown away safely.
- **How to safely touch oral anti-cancer medications**

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 oral 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 medication?

The following table lists side effects that you may have when taking ruxolitinib. 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 ruxolitinib.

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>Low neutrophils (white blood cells) in the blood (neutropenia)</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>You have a fever if your temperature taken in your mouth (oral temperature) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>What to do?</p> <p>If your health care team has told you that you have low neutrophils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>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.</p>

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
<p>If you have a fever:</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>Low platelets in the blood</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for signs of bleeding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 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) <p>What to do?</p> <p>If your health care team has told you that you have low platelets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>If you have signs of bleeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>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.</p>

Very Common Side Effects (50 or more out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
If you have bleeding that does not stop or is severe (very heavy), you must get emergency medical help right away.	
<p>Anemia (low red blood cells)</p> <p>(May be severe)</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may feel more tired or weaker than normal. Pale skin and cold hands and feet. You may feel short of breath, dizzy or lightheaded. This may occur in days to weeks after your treatment starts. <p>What to do?</p> <p>If your health care team has told you that you have anemia (low red blood cells):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest often and eat well. Light exercise, such as walking may help. You may need medication or a blood transfusion. If it is very bad, your doctor may need to make changes to your treatment regimen. 	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
<p>Liver problems</p> <p>Your health care team may check your liver function with a blood test. The liver changes do not usually cause any symptoms.</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely, you may develop yellowish skin or eyes, unusually dark pee or pain on the right side of your belly. This may be severe. 	Get emergency medical help right away

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? If you have any symptoms of liver problems, get emergency medical help right away.	
Higher than normal cholesterol or fat levels in the blood What to look for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cholesterol or fat levels usually do not cause any symptoms. • Since your treatment may cause high cholesterol, your health care team may do regular blood tests to check your cholesterol levels. What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your health care team may give you medication to treat high cholesterol or fat levels. • If you already take medication for high cholesterol or fat levels, your health care team may change the amount or type of medication you take. 	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
Dizziness What to look for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may feel light-headed and like you might faint (pass out). What to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay down right away so you do not fall. • Slowly get up and start moving once you feel better. • Do not drive a motor vehicle or use machinery if you feel dizzy. 	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
<p>Headache; Mild joint, muscle pain or cramps</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild headache. • New pain in your muscles or joints, muscle cramps, or feeling achy. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take pain medication (acetaminophen or opioids such as codeine, morphine, hydromorphone, oxycodone) as prescribed. • Read the above section: "What should I do if I 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. <p>Ask your health care team for the Pain pamphlet for more information.</p>	<p>Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe</p>
<p>Diarrhea</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose, watery, unformed stool (poo) that may happen days to weeks after you get your treatment. <p>What to do?</p> <p>If you have diarrhea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. 	<p>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)</p>

Less Common Side Effects (10 to 24 out of 100 people)	
Side effects and what to do	When to contact health care team
Ask your health care team for the Diarrhea pamphlet for more information.	
<p>Weight gain</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may notice your clothes fit tighter. You may gain weight even though you have not changed the way you eat or exercise. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to eat a healthy and well balanced diet. Eat small meals throughout the day. Ask your health care team to see a dietician to help you control your weight if this bothers you. <p>If you notice you are gaining weight, talk to your health care team to find out what may be causing this and what to do.</p>	Talk to your health care team if it does not improve or if it is severe
<p>Cough and feeling short of breath</p> <p>What to look for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may have a cough and feel short of breath. Symptoms that commonly occur with a cough are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>What to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check your temperature to see if you have a fever. Read the above section "What should I do if I feel unwell, have pain, a headache or a fever?". 	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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	

Other rare, but serious side effects are possible.

If you experience ANY of the following, speak to your cancer health care provider or get emergency medical help right away:

- Irregular heartbeat, chest pain, or fainting
- Swelling in legs, ankles or belly
- Pain, swelling and hardening of a vein in your arm or leg
- Unusual skin changes (skin sores that do not heal; new growths)
- Difficulty thinking, speaking or walking
- Confusion, loss of balance, weakness on one side of your body
- Blurry and/or loss of vision

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: _____

Other Notes:

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For more links on how to manage your symptoms go to www.cancercareontario.ca/symptoms.

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.