

Afatinib (Gilotrif)

Here is important information on how to use, handle, and store your medicine, what side effects to look for and how to manage them.

What it looks like:

- 20 mg tablet (off-white, round)
- 30 mg tablet (dark blue, round)
- 40 mg tablet (light blue, round)

How to handle and store:

- **There are special safe handling instructions for this medicine.** Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse about the precautions you need to follow when you take this medicine at home.
- Store in a closed container at room temperature in a dry place such as a cabinet away from light, heat, and moisture.
- **Do not** store in your bathroom or refrigerator.
- Keep this medicine away from children and **do not** share it with anyone.

How to take:

- Take one time each day, at the same time each day. **Do not** take with food.
- Swallow the tablet whole with a full glass of water.
- Take 1 hour before or 2 hours after you eat.
- **Do not** crush, break, or chew the tablets.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. **Do not double up on doses.**
- **Do not** take more tablets than ordered by your doctor.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

Disposal:

- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about how to get rid of prescription medicines safely.

Precautions:

- Tell your doctor or pharmacist about all medicines you are taking, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal products.
- **Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice.** This can increase your risk of side effects.
- **Do not** take St. John's Wort.
- **Do not get pregnant while on this medicine.** Talk with your doctor about what birth control to use.

Possible Side Effects

You can find more information on side effects in the Patient Education booklet, *Treatment with Chemotherapy and Anti-Cancer Medicines*.

Skin Rash

What to do:

- Call your doctor if you get a rash. Tell your doctor when the rash started, the location of your rash, if it is itchy or painful and if the rash has spread or is getting worse.
- Use a fragrance-free, dye-free moisturizer on your skin 2 times a day.
- Protect your skin from sunlight. Wear clothes to cover your skin and use sunscreen (at least SPF 30).
- **Do not** use acne medicines or drying agents on your rash, they can make your rash worse.
- Your doctor may tell you to use topical medicine (hydrocortisone or clindamycin gel) to help with this problem.

Diarrhea

What to do:

- Call your doctor if this happens more than 4 times in a day, or lasts for more than 1 to 2 days or if you feel lightheaded or dizzy.
- Unless told otherwise, drink extra fluids during the day.
- Your doctor may tell you to take a medicine called Loperamide (Imodium). It is important to follow your doctor's orders for taking this medicine, not the instructions on the box.

Soreness of the Mouth or Throat (Mucositis)

What this means: You may get sores or blisters on your lips or in your mouth.

What to do:

- Drink plenty of fluids and eat moist foods.
- **Do not** smoke or drink alcohol. This can make your symptoms worse.
- **Do not** use mouthwashes with alcohol or peroxide.
- Call your doctor if it is uncomfortable to eat or drink.

Changes in Lab Values

What to do:

- It is important to keep your appointments to have your blood work checked.
- Your doctor may order the following blood tests: electrolytes, liver function, complete blood count (CBC).

Difficulty Breathing or Cough

What to do:

- Call your doctor if you have any change in your ability to breathe.
- Tell your doctor if you have a cough that will not go away.

Vision Changes

What to do:

- Call your doctor if you have any eye pain or changes in your vision.

This is not a complete list of all possible side effects. Tell your doctor if you have these or any other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine. Your James health care team can give you other tips for how to manage your side effects.