



Mass General Brigham
Mass General Cancer Center

Piqray (alpelisib)

Oral targeted therapy teaching

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What is Oral Targeted Cancer Therapy?

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Oral Targeted Therapy

What is Oral Targeted Therapy?

What are PI3K Inhibitors?

- Oral targeted therapy is cancer therapy that is taken by mouth and comes in a tablet or capsule form.
- Oral targeted therapy may be prescribed along with other types of cancer therapies such as chemotherapy or hormone therapy.
- How it works:
 - Targeted therapy “targets” the changes in cells that cause cancer.
 - Targeted therapy can identify and attack certain types of cancer cells.
 - Targeted therapy can impact the environment in which a cancer cell grows, or it can target and alter cells that help cancer grow.

What are PI3K Inhibitors?

- PI3K (phosphatidylinositol-3 kinase) Inhibitors are a type of oral targeted therapy.
- How do they work?
 - PI3K inhibitors block a growth pathway cancer cells that carry a PI3KCA mutation use
 - This prevents the cells from growing, reproducing, and surviving.
- Alpelisib is a PI3K inhibitor for people with a personal history of hormone receptor positive, HER2 negative advanced or metastatic breast cancer with a PI3KCA mutation.
 - It is combined with fulvestrant (Faslodex) injection

How to Take Piqray (alpelisib)

- Take alpelisib once daily **with food**, at the same time each day.
- Swallow whole with water and do not break, chew, or crush your tablets.
- If you vomit up a dose, do not take an additional dose that day; resume the dosing schedule the next day at the usual time
- If you miss a dose:
 - **You can take the missed dose up to 9 hours after the time you usually take it.**
 - If more than 9 hours have passed, skip that dose and take your next dose the next day at the usual time.
 - Do not take 2 doses at the same time to make up for the missed dose.

Keeping Track of Your Piqray (alpelisib) Schedule

- Create a medicine calendar either on paper or in your tablet or phone to keep track of your doses.
- Share the calendar with your cancer treatment team at visits.
- Pill boxes can be used to keep track of your oral chemotherapy doses. Do not mix other pills in the box you use for your oral chemotherapy.

Side Effects of Alpelisib

Common:

- Fatigue or tiredness
- High blood sugar
- Diarrhea
- Hair thinning or hair loss
- Rash – *take cetirizine (Zyrtec) 10mg (1 tablet) twice a day to prevent rash*
- Nausea, vomiting
- Low blood counts
 - Decrease in white blood cells that fight infection
 - Decrease in red blood cells that deliver oxygen throughout the body
 - Decrease in platelets that help blood to clot

Rare:

- Signs of infection– Fever (temperature of 100.4 or higher), cough, sore throat, chills
- Signs of an allergic reaction– wheezing, shortness of breath, swelling of the face, lips, or tongue
- Signs of severe high blood sugar– increased thirst, increased urination, confusion, fatigue
- Signs of a severe rash—blistering or peeling
- Severe diarrhea– 4 or more loose stools per day
- Signs of a lung problem– shortness of breath, dry cough, chest pain

Piqray (alpelisib) May Have Drug Interactions

- Some drugs or supplements should not be taken at the same time as other drugs because they can cause side effects or cause the drug to not work well. This is called a drug interaction.
- Tell your treatment team about ALL prescription and over-the-counter medications (this includes vitamins and herbal products)
- Talk with your treatment team or pharmacist before starting any new medications or supplements.

Managing Diarrhea

Diet:

- Eat a bland diet that is easy to digest until diarrhea resolves
- BRAT diet: bananas, rice, applesauce, toast
- Do not eat high fiber foods (raw vegetables/fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, beans)
- Do not have dairy, alcohol, caffeine, spicy and fried foods

Stay Hydrated:

- Drink 8-10 glasses (64-80 ounces) of non-caffeinated, non-carbonated beverages daily
- Gatorade, Pedialyte, or other beverages with electrolytes may be recommended with severe diarrhea

Medication for Management of Diarrhea

- Imodium (loperamide) is the medication of choice for treating diarrhea during cancer treatment. It is available over the counter.
- **Instructions for use:**
 - **Take 2 tablets (4mg) with your first loose/watery stool**
 - **Then take 1 tablet (2mg) with each loose stool thereafter**
 - **Do not take more than 8 tablets (16mg) in 24 hours**
- Contact your care team if you continue to experience diarrhea after taking Imodium for 24 hours
- Refer to <https://www.massgeneral.org/assets/mgh/pdf/cancer-center/breast-cancer/bowel-management.pdf> for more information.

Managing Rashes

- **Take cetirizine (Zyrtec) 10mg twice daily to prevent rash.** This is an over-the-counter antihistamine; you do not need a prescription.
- Contact your treatment team if you develop a rash while taking Piqray (alpelisib).
- If you develop a mild rash, you may also be prescribed a topical steroid.
- If the rash is more pronounced (covering more than 30% of your body), oral steroids and/or holding of the drug may be required.

Exanthematous (morbilliform) drug eruption



Profuse eruption of macules and papules on the back of a patient with exanthematous drug eruption.

UpToDate®

Managing High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)

- Piqray (alpelisib) can cause new or worsening high blood sugar.
- Your blood sugar levels will be closely monitored by your treatment team when you come into the clinic.
- You may be asked to check your blood sugar at home as well. Your treatment team will let you know if this is necessary.
- Some patients need to start medication, such as metformin, to help lower their blood sugar while taking Piqray (alpelisib). Your treatment team will let you know if this is necessary.
- Consuming a diet low in carbohydrates is helpful to maintain control of your blood sugar while taking Piqray (alpelisib).

How to Prevent Infections

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds after touching surfaces and dry your hands thoroughly afterwards
- Use a hand sanitizer if you cannot readily wash your hands
- Avoid having contact with other people who are sick
- Avoid crowds of people

Supportive Care Resources

- Yoga
- Acupuncture / Acupressure
- Massage
- Support groups
- Survivorship programs
- Workshops
- Music therapy, Art therapy
- To learn more about all our Supportive Care offerings log onto cancercenterpx.org

Storage and Handling of Oral Targeted Therapy

- Keep this medicine in its original bottle or separate pill box – do not mix other medications into the pill box.
- Store at room temperature in a dry location away from direct light.
- Keep this medicine out of reach from children and pets.
- Wash your hands before and after handling this medicine.

Disposal of Oral Targeted Therapy

- If you have unused medication, do not throw it in the trash and do not flush it down the sink/toilet.
- You may dispose of this medication by:
 - Calling your city or county's trash and recycling service for information on hazardous drug take-back programs in your community.
 - Bringing unused oral targeted therapy to MGH Boston and disposing in the blue drug take-back receptacles located outside of the Main Lobby Yawkey elevators or near the retail pharmacy in the Wang building. MGH Waltham does not accept unused oral chemotherapy.
 - Asking your treatment team or pharmacist for more information.

Sexuality and Birth Control

- It is fine to be sexually active while receiving Piqray (alpelisib).
- **Piqray (alpelisib) can harm a developing baby.** You should not get pregnant or get someone pregnant while take either of these medications.
- Women may notice a change in their menstrual periods during chemotherapy treatment. Bleeding may lessen, become spotty, or stop completely. Women can still get pregnant even if their menstrual period changes or stops. **Always use a reliable form of birth control.**
- Use a reliable barrier contraceptive (e.g. condoms) method during treatment **and for at least 1 week after the last dose of Piqray (alpelisib).**
- Tell your healthcare team right away if you have unprotected sex or if you think that birth control has failed.



Fertility

- Your treatment can affect fertility in women and men.
- Infertility means you cannot become pregnant or make someone pregnant. Infertility related to therapy can be temporary or permanent.
- Before starting treatment, talk with your healthcare team about preserving your fertility and what you can do.
 - Egg harvesting for women and sperm banking for men may be options



Your Breast Cancer Team

- Oncologist
- Nurse Practitioner
- Pharmacist
- Oncology Social Worker
- Practice Nurse
- Infusion Nurse



When to call?

If experiencing:

- Fever of 100.4F (38C) or higher
- Chills
- Bleeding/unusual bruising
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Dizziness
- Problems with urination
- Uncontrolled nausea, vomiting
- Uncontrolled diarrhea
- Flu-like symptoms
- Extreme fatigue or weakness
- Cough or shortness of breath
- Confusion or agitation
- Rapid heartbeat
- New swelling in arms/legs, face
- Uncontrolled pain or new pain
- COVID-19 or other infectious disease exposures



Contact Information

- For urgent matters, please call. For all other non-urgent matters, please use the patient portal
- **Phone Numbers:**
 - Boston: 617-726-6500
 - Waltham: 781-487-6100
 - Danvers: 978-882-6060
- **Patient Portal:**
 - patientgateway.org





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