

Pembrolizumab

Care Team Contact Information: _____

Pharmacy Contact Information: _____

Diagnosis: _____

- This treatment is used for many types of cancer.

Goal of Treatment: _____

- Treatment may continue for a certain time period, until it no longer works, or until side effects are no longer controlled.

Treatment Regimen

Treatment Name	How the Treatment Works	How the Treatment is Given
Pembrolizumab (pem-broh-LIH-zoo-mab): KEYTRUDA® (kee-TROO-duh)	Boosts your immune system to help it attack cancer cells more effectively.	Infusion given into a vein.

Treatment Administration and Schedule: Treatment is typically repeated every 3 or 6 weeks. This length of time is called a “cycle.” Your care team will tell you how frequently you will receive treatment.

Every 3 Weeks Dosing:

Treatment Name	Cycle 1							Next Cycle
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	...	Day 21	Day 1
Pembrolizumab	✓							✓

Every 6 Weeks Dosing:

Treatment Name	Cycle 1							Next Cycle
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	...	Day 42	Day 1
Pembrolizumab	✓							✓

Appointments: Appointments may include regular check-ups with your care team, treatment appointments, lab visits, and imaging tests. It's important to keep your appointments whenever you can. If you miss any appointments, call your care provider as soon as possible to reschedule your appointment.

Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
Low Red Blood Cell (RBC) Count and Hemoglobin (Hgb)	Description: RBCs and Hgb help bring oxygen to your body's tissues and take away carbon dioxide. If you have low RBC counts or Hgb, you may feel weak, tired, or look pale. Recommendations • Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. • Avoid operating heavy machinery when tired. • Balance work and rest, staying active but resting when needed. Talk to your care team if you have: • Shortness of breath • Dizziness • Fast or abnormal heartbeats • Severe headache
Fatigue	Description: Fatigue is a constant and sometimes strong feeling of tiredness. Recommendations: • Routine exercise has been shown to decrease levels of fatigue. Work with your care team to find the right type of exercise for you. • Ask your family and friends for help with daily tasks and emotional support. • Try healthy ways to feel better, like meditation, writing in a journal, doing yoga, and using guided imagery to lower anxiety and feel good. • Make a regular sleep schedule and limit naps during the day so you can sleep better at night, aiming for 7 to 8 hours of sleep. • Don't use heavy machines or do things that need your full attention if you're very tired to avoid accidents. Talk to your care team if you have: • Tiredness that affects your daily life • Tiredness all the time, and it doesn't get better with rest • Dizziness and weakness, along with being tired
Skin Problems	Description: Treatment can make your immune system attack healthy skin cells. This can cause a rash, itching, and other skin problems. Recommendations: • Keep your skin soft and moisturized with lotions or creams. • Wear loose, comfortable clothes. • Don't use perfumes and colognes. • Stay out of the sun, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM. • Wear long-sleeved shirts with UV protection and a wide hat to block the sun. • Use sunscreen with at least SPF 30 and put on lip balm with SPF too. • Don't use tanning beds. • Your care team may suggest taking certain medicines or applying special creams. Talk to your care team if you have: • Rash • Itching • Skin blistering or peeling • Painful sore or ulcers in the mouth or nose, throat, or genital area

Muscle or Bone Pain	Description: Treatment can cause your immune system to attack your bones and muscles. This can make your muscles and bones hurt. Recommendations: • Keep track of when you feel pain and what makes it better or worse. • Do easy exercises like walking or stretching, but check with your care team first. • Put a warm cloth or heating pad on your muscles to help them relax. • Use cold packs to help with swelling and pain. • Your care team may suggest taking certain medicines. Talk to your care team if you have: • Pain in your muscles or bones that makes it hard for you to take care of yourself and do things on your own
Intestinal problems	Description: Treatment can make your immune system attack healthy cells in your intestines. This can cause diarrhea or abdominal pain. Recommendations: • Keep track of how many times you go to the bathroom each day. • Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water or other fluids every day, unless your doctor tells you otherwise. • Eat small meals of mild, low-fiber foods like bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast. • Stay away from foods with high fiber (like raw vegetables, fruits, and whole grains), foods that cause gas (like broccoli and beans), dairy foods (like yogurt and milk), and spicy, fried, and greasy foods. • Your care team may suggest taking certain medicines. Talk to your care team if you have: • Diarrhea (loose stools) or more frequent bowel movements than usual (4 times a day more than you normally do) • Diarrhea that makes it hard for you to take care of yourself and do things on your own • Stool that are black, tarry, sticky, or have blood or mucus • Severe stomach-area (abdominal) pain or tenderness

Select Rare or Serious Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms	
Lung Problems	- Cough - Shortness of breath	Chest pain
Liver Problems	- Yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes - Severe nausea or vomiting - Pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen)	- Dark urine (tea colored) - Bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
Hormone Gland Problems	- Headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches - Eye sensitivity to light - Eye problems - Rapid heartbeat - Increased sweating - Extreme tiredness - Weight gain or weight loss - Feeling more hungry or thirsty than usual	- Urinating more often than usual - Hair loss - Feeling cold - Constipation - Your voice gets deeper - Dizziness or fainting - Changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness
Kidney Problems	- Decrease in your amount of urine - Blood in your urine	- Swelling of your ankles - Loss of appetite
Problems in Other Organs and Tissues	- Chest pain, irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, swelling of ankles - Confusion, sleepiness, memory problems, changes in mood or behavior, stiff neck, balance problems, tingling or numbness of the arms or legs	- Double vision, blurry vision, sensitivity to light, eye pain, changes in eyesight - Persistent or severe muscle pain or weakness, muscle cramps - Low red blood cells, bruising
Infusion Reactions	- Chills or shaking - Itching or rash - Flushing - Shortness of breath or wheezing	- Dizziness - Feeling like passing out - Fever - Back pain

Before starting treatment, ask your care team when to call 9-1-1 or seek emergency help.
If you experience any new, worsening, or uncontrolled side effects, contact your care team immediately.

Intimacy, Pregnancy, and Breastfeeding

- Treatment may **change how you feel about intimacy and your body**. However, physical closeness—such as holding hands and hugging—remains safe. It is common to have questions about intimacy. If needed, talk to your care team for guidance.
- Treatment may **harm an unborn baby**.
 - If you might get pregnant, take a pregnancy test before starting treatment.
 - Use an effective method of birth control during treatment and for 4 months after your last dose.
 - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
 - If your partners could be pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment.
- **Do NOT breastfeed** during treatment and for 4 months after your last dose.

Additional Information

- **Tell your care team about all the medicines you take.**
This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and herbal products. Before starting any new medicine, supplement, or vaccine, ask your care team first.
- **Treatment may cause side effects that require medicines or pausing the therapy.**
Your care team may treat you with corticosteroids or hormone replacement medicines. Your care team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment if you have certain side effects.
- **Tell your care team about all your health problems.**
This includes issues with your immune system, like Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or lupus. Also, tell them if you have had an organ transplant, like a kidney or eye transplant. Let them know if you had a stem cell transplant from a donor, had radiation to your chest, or have a nerve problem like myasthenia gravis or Guillain-Barré syndrome.
- **This Patient Education Sheet may not describe all possible side effects.**
Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Notes

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Scan the QR code below to access this education sheet.



Important notice: The Association of Cancer Care Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), Network for Collaborative Oncology Development & Advancement, Inc. (NCODA), and Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) have collaborated in gathering information for and developing this patient education guide. This guide represents a brief summary of the medication derived from information provided by the drug manufacturer and other resources.

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