

Axitinib and Pembrolizumab

Care Team Contact Information: _____

Pharmacy Contact Information: _____

Diagnosis: _____

- This treatment is often used for kidney cancer, but it may also be used for other diagnoses.

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
Axitinib (AK-sih-TIH-nib): Inlyta (in-LY-tuh)	Slows down or stops the growth of cancer or tumor cells by blocking specific proteins involved in tumor growth and the formation of blood vessels.	Tablet(s) taken by mouth.
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: Pembrolizumab is typically given once every 3 or 6 weeks. This length of time is called a “cycle”. Axitinib is taken by mouth 2 times each day.

Your axitinib dose:

- Axitinib comes in 2 tablet strengths: 1 mg and 5 mg.
- Your care team will tell you how many of each tablet to take. If needed, they may change your dose during your treatment.
- Your dose might differ, but axitinib is usually taken as one 5 mg tablet by mouth 2 times a day.
- Axitinib should be taken with or without food at the same times each day.
- Swallow axitinib tablet(s) whole with a full glass of water.
- Do NOT crush, chew, or split axitinib tablets, unless you are instructed to do so by your care team.
- If you miss a dose and your next scheduled dose is in less than 6 hours, take your next dose at the normal time. Do NOT make up the missed dose.

Treatment Administration and Schedule (Continued)

☐ Option #1: Pembrolizumab Given Every 3 Weeks

Treatment Name	Cycle 1																					Next Cycle
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 1
Treatment Given at the Clinic or Hospital																						
Pembrolizumab	✓																					✓
Treatment Taken at Home																						
Axitinib AM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Axitinib PM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

☐ Option #2: Pembrolizumab Given Every 6 Weeks

Treatment Name	Cycle 1																					
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	
Treatment Given at the Clinic or Hospital																						
Pembrolizumab	✓																					
Treatment Taken at Home																						
Axitinib AM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Axitinib PM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Treatment Name	Cycle 1 (Continued)																					Next Cycle
	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	Day 28	Day 29	Day 30	Day 31	Day 32	Day 33	Day 34	Day 35	Day 36	Day 37	Day 38	Day 39	Day 40	Day 41	Day 42	Day 1
Treatment Given at the Clinic or Hospital																						
Pembrolizumab																						✓
Treatment Taken at Home																						
Axitinib AM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Axitinib PM Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Storage and Handling of Axitinib

- Store axitinib at room temperature between 68°F and 77°F in a dry location away from light.
- Keep axitinib and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.
- People who are or may become pregnant should wear gloves when handling the medicine.
- Ask your care team how to safely throw away any unused axitinib.

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.

Supportive Care to Prevent and Treat Side Effects

Description	Supportive Care Given at the Clinic or Hospital	Supportive Care Taken at Home
To help prevent or treat nausea or vomiting		
Other		

Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
High Blood Pressure	Description: Treatment can cause high blood pressure. It usually has no symptoms and can be dangerous if not treated. High blood pressure increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, and other health problems. Recommendations: - Exercise regularly, control your weight, and limit alcohol and sodium intake. - If you are already being treated for high blood pressure, your care team may change your blood pressure medicine. - Your care team may ask you to track your blood pressure. Talk to your care team if you have: - Headaches - Dizziness or lightheadedness - Blurred vision - Trouble breathing - Nose bleeds - A pounding sensation in the chest, neck, or ears - Irregular heartbeats - Chest pain or pressure
Nausea and Vomiting	Description: Nausea is an uncomfortable feeling in your stomach or the need to throw up. This may or may not cause vomiting. Recommendations: - Eat smaller, more frequent meals. - Avoid fatty, fried, spicy, or highly sweet foods. - Eat bland foods at room temperature and drink clear liquids. - If you vomit, start with small amounts of water, broth, or other clear liquids when you are ready to eat again. If that stays down, then try soft foods (such as gelatin, plain cornstarch pudding, yogurt, strained soup, or strained cooked cereal). Slowly work up to eating solid food. - Your care team may prescribe medicine for these symptoms. Talk to your care team if you have: - Vomiting for more than 24 hours - Vomiting that's nonstop - Signs of dehydration (like feeling very thirsty, having a dry mouth, feeling dizzy, or having dark urine) - Blood or coffee-ground-like appearance in your vomit - Bad stomach pain that doesn't go away after vomiting

Diarrhea	Description: Diarrhea is when you have loose, watery bowel movements more often than usual. The need to use the bathroom may occur urgently. 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 recommend medicine for diarrhea. Talk to your care team if you have: • 4 or more bowel movements than normal in 24 hours • Dizziness or lightheadedness while having diarrhea • Bloody diarrhea
Liver Problems	Description: Treatment can harm your liver. This may cause nausea, stomach pain, and bleeding or bruising. It can also turn your skin and eyes yellow and make your urine dark. Lab tests may be performed to monitor liver function. Talk to your care team if you have: • 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

Low Appetite

Description: Treatment can cause a low appetite, which means you may not feel like eating much. It's important to eat enough so your body gets the nutrients it needs to heal and stay strong. Eating healthy foods helps you feel better and recover faster.

Recommendations:

- Do some physical activity before a meal. Before starting an exercise program, talk with your care team.
- Take note of the times during the day when your appetite is best. Do not limit food when your appetite is good. Eat your largest meal when you feel the most hungry, whether it is breakfast, lunch, or dinner.
- Eat 5-6 small meals per day and snack anytime.
- Choose foods high in protein, such as beans, chicken, fish, meat, yogurt, tofu, and eggs. During meals, eat high-protein foods first.
- Choose foods that are high in calories. Do not select foods that are labeled "low-fat," "fat-free" or "diet."
- If you feel full quickly when eating, do not drink any liquids 30 minutes before a meal so you have more room for solid food. Then, drink liquids between meals. Choose liquids with extra calories, not diet drinks.
- Eat a bedtime snack. Choose something easy to digest, such as peanut butter and crackers. If you tend to experience reflux or heartburn, eat at least an hour before lying down.
- If food is not appealing, try a nutritious beverage, such as a high-protein shake or smoothie, instead of solid food.
- Ask your care team to recommend a liquid nutrition supplement. Add a scoop of protein powder, yogurt, or ice cream for added protein and calories.

Talk to your care team if you have:

- Weight loss
- No appetite
- Tiredness

Hand-Foot Skin Reaction	Description: Hand-Foot Skin Reaction causes dryness, thickening, calluses, blisters, or cracking of the skin on the palms of your hands and soles of your feet. Recommendations: • Keep hands and feet moisturized with a non-scented moisturizing cream. • Applying urea 10% or 20% cream twice daily to the affected area may be helpful. • Avoid exposure to hot water on the hands and feet in showers or baths that may dry out the skin or by doing dishes. • Avoid tight-fitting shoes or socks. • Avoid excess rubbing on hands and feet unless putting on lotion. • Wear gloves when working with your hands. Talk to your care team if you have: • Painful blisters or calluses on your hands or feet
Voice Changes or Hoarseness	Description: Hoarseness is when you have a weak, rough, or harsh voice. Recommendations: • Drink plenty of water and avoiding irritants (e.g., dust, smoke, alcohol, industrial chemicals). • Write things down to give your voice a break. • Avoid shouting or whispering. Talk to your care team if you have: • Severe hoarseness • Pain or soreness in the throat
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

Hormone Problems	Description: Treatment can change how much hormones your adrenal and thyroid glands make. Your care team will check hormone levels at the beginning of treatment, at different times while you're being treated, or if you start showing symptoms. Talk to your care team if you have: • 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
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Select Rare Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms		
Bleeding	- Vomiting blood or if your vomit looks like coffee-grounds - Pink or brown urine - Red or black (looks like tar) stools - Coughing up blood or blood clots - Unusual vaginal bleeding - Nose bleeds that happen often - Bruising - Lightheadedness		
Blood Clots	Signs or symptoms of a blood clot in the lung, arm, or leg may include: - Shortness of breath - Chest pain - Arm or leg swelling	Signs or symptoms of a heart attack may include: - Chest pain that may spread to the arms, neck, jaw, back, or stomach area (abdomen) - Feeling sweaty - Shortness of breath - Feeling sick or vomiting	Signs or symptoms of stroke may include: - Sudden numbness or weakness, especially on one side of the body - Severe headache or confusion - Problems with vision, speech, or balance
Tear in Your Stomach or Intestinal Wall or an Abnormal Connection between 2 Parts of Your Body (Fistula)	- Severe pain or tenderness in your stomach-area (abdomen) - Swelling of the abdomen - Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher - Chills - Nausea - Vomiting - Dehydration		
Lung Problems	- Cough - Shortness of breath - Chest pain		
Skin Problems	- Rash - Itching - Skin blistering or peeling - Painful sore or ulcers in mouth or nose or throat		
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 - Vision changes, eye pain - Ringing, buzzing, or hissing in the ear, difficulty hearing, difficulty understanding speech - 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 are able to become pregnant, take a pregnancy test before starting treatment.
 - Use an effective method of birth control during treatment, for 1 week after your last dose of axitinib, and for 4 months after your last dose of pembrolizumab.
 - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
 - If your partner(s) could become pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment and for 1 week after your last dose of axitinib.
- **Do NOT breastfeed** during treatment, for 2 weeks after your last dose of axitinib, and for 4 months after your last dose of pembrolizumab.

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.
- **Avoid drinking grapefruit juice, eating grapefruit, or taking supplements that contain grapefruit or St. John's wort** during treatment.
- **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.
- **Wound healing problems** have happened in some people who take axitinib. Tell your care team if you plan to have any surgery before or during treatment.
 - You should stop taking axitinib at least 2 days before planned surgery.
 - Your care team should tell you when you may start taking axitinib again after surgery. It is typically held for at least 2 weeks following major surgery.
- **Treatment may cause osteonecrosis of the jaw (ONJ)**, causing pain, numbness, swelling, or drainage in the jaw, mouth, or teeth. Your care team may recommend dental clearance to lower this risk before starting therapy.
- There is a risk of developing **protein in your urine**. Your care team will check your urine for protein before and during treatment, and may adjust or stop your treatment if protein is found.
- **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

Updated Date: November 3, 2025

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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