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Sunitinib: Patient drug information

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(For additional information [see "Sunitinib: Drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US Sutent

Brand Names: Canada Sutent

Warning

- Very bad and sometimes deadly liver problems have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat cancer.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to sunitinib or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you are taking St. John's wort. Do not take St. John's wort with this drug. This drug may not work as well.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.

- A very bad and sometimes deadly brain problem called posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES) has happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have signs like feeling confused, lowered alertness, change in eyesight, loss of eyesight, seizures, or very bad headache.
- Holes in the GI (gastrointestinal) tract may rarely happen.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly bleeding problems have happened with this drug. Talk with the doctor.
- Very bad jaw problems have happened with this drug. Have a dental exam before you start this drug. Take good care of your teeth. Talk with your doctor.
- High protein levels in the urine and kidney problems have happened with this drug. Sometimes, these have been deadly. You will need to have your urine checked while taking this drug. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause thyroid gland problems. Talk with the doctor.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- This drug may cause high blood pressure.
- Have your blood pressure checked often. Talk with your doctor.
- This drug may lower blood sugar levels. This may lead to passing out or the need to go to the hospital. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of low blood sugar like anxiety, sweating, feeling weak, dizziness, feeling sleepy, fast heartbeat, change in eyesight, headache, chills, shakiness, confusion, or hunger.
- Patients with cancer who take this drug may be at greater risk of getting a bad and sometimes deadly health problem called tumor lysis syndrome (TLS). Call your doctor right away if you have a fast heartbeat or a heartbeat that does not feel normal; any passing out; trouble passing urine; muscle weakness or cramps; upset stomach, throwing up, loose stools or not able to eat; or feel sluggish.
- This drug may affect how wounds heal. If you need to have surgery, you may need to stop this drug before surgery. Start taking it again after surgery as you have been told by your doctor. Talk with your doctor.
- A very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause very bad health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- Use birth control that you can trust to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds; coughing up blood; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; vaginal bleeding that is not normal; bruises without a reason or that get bigger; or any bleeding that is very bad or that you cannot

stop.

- Signs of a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm.
- Jaw pain.
- Redness or irritation of the palms of hands or soles of feet.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly heart problems like heart failure and heart attack have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have a heartbeat that does not feel normal, chest pain or pressure, shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly blood problems like thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura/hemolytic uremic syndrome (TTP/HUS) have happened with this drug in some people. Call your doctor right away if you feel very tired or weak or have any bruising or bleeding; dark urine or yellow skin or eyes; pale skin; change in the amount of urine passed; change in eyesight; change in strength on 1 side is greater than the other, trouble speaking or thinking, or change in balance; or fever.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling tired or weak.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Not hungry.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Hard stools (constipation).
- Headache.
- Change in color of hair.
- Hair loss.
- Dry skin.
- Itching.
- Not able to sleep.
- Change in taste.
- Dry mouth.
- Gas.
- Muscle or joint pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Take with or without food.
- Do not open the capsules.
- Avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice.
- If you have upset stomach, throwing up, loose stools (diarrhea), or are not hungry, talk with your doctor. There may be ways to lower these side effects.
- You may need to have an ECG checked before starting this drug and while taking it. Talk with your doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist about how to throw out unused drugs.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

