

# Vemurafenib and Rituximab

**Care Team Contact Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pharmacy Contact Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Diagnosis:** \_\_\_\_\_

- This treatment is often used for hairy cell leukemia (HCL).
- It may also be used for other reasons.

**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
Vemurafenib (VEH-myoo-RA-feh-nib): Zelboraf (ZEL-boh-raf)	Slows down or stops the growth of cancer cells by blocking a specific protein that helps them survive.	Tablets taken by mouth.
Rituximab (rih-TUK-sih-mab): Rituxan (rih-TUK-sun), Riabni, Ruxience, Truxima	Helps your immune system find and attack cancer cells by targeting a specific protein on their surface.	Infusion into a vein (intravenous (IV) infusion).

**Note:** Your care team may give you rituximab and hyaluronidase (Rituxan Hycela) instead of rituximab. Rituximab and hyaluronidase is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection) into the stomach area (abdomen) over 5 to 7 minutes.

**Treatment Administration and Schedule:** Treatment is separated into 2 parts: induction and consolidation. The first induction cycle lasts 4 weeks, followed by 2 weeks of rest. A second 4-week induction cycle follows. After the second induction, you may receive consolidation therapy with rituximab alone. During consolidation, rituximab is typically given for 4 doses.

## Induction Cycles

Treatment Name	Induction Cycle, Days																												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
<b>Treatment Given at the Clinic or Hospital</b>																													
Rituximab	✓														✓														
<b>Treatment Taken at Home</b>																													
Vemurafenib Morning Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vemurafenib Evening Dose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Consolidation Cycles

Treatment Name	Consolidation Cycle								Next Cycle
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	...	Day 15	Day 16	...	Day 28	Day 1
Rituximab	✓				✓				✓

Your vemurafenib dosing instructions:

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- Vemurafenib comes in 1 tablet strength: 240 mg.
- Your dose may differ, but vemurafenib is typically taken as four 240 mg tablets (960 mg) by mouth 2 times a day.
- Take vemurafenib 2 times a day (about 12 hours apart), around the same times each day.
- Take vemurafenib with or without food.
- Swallow vemurafenib tablets whole. Do not chew, crush, dissolve, or cut tablets.
- Do not take an additional dose of vemurafenib if you vomit after taking your scheduled dose. Take your next dose at your regular time.
- If you miss a dose of vemurafenib, take it as soon as you remember. If it is within 4 hours of your next scheduled dose, just take your next dose at your regular time. Do not make up for the missed dose.
- If you take too much vemurafenib, call your care team or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

## Storage and Handling of Vemurafenib

- Store vemurafenib at room temperature between 68°F and 77°F (20°C and 25°C) in a dry location.
- Store vemurafenib in the original container with the lid tightly closed.
- Keep vemurafenib and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.
- Ask your care team how to safely throw away any unused vemurafenib.

**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 infusion-related reactions	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help prevent or treat nausea and vomiting	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help lower the risk of infections	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
To help prevent hand-foot skin reaction (HFSR)	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Other	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Common Side Effects

Side Effect	Important Information
<p><b>Infusion-Related Reactions (Boxed Warning)</b></p>	<p>Description: Infusion reactions are common with rituximab and can sometimes be severe or life-threatening.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your care team may prescribe medicines before each infusion of rituximab to help decrease your risk for infusion reactions or to help make any infusion reaction less severe.</li> <li>• You may be monitored for infusion reactions during each infusion of rituximab.</li> <li>• Your care team may slow down or stop your infusion or completely stop treatment with rituximab if you have an infusion reaction.</li> </ul> <p>Get medical help right away if you develop any of the following symptoms of infusion reaction during or after an infusion of rituximab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chills or shaking</li> <li>• Itching, rash, or flushing</li> <li>• Trouble breathing, wheezing, or tongue swelling</li> <li>• Dizziness or feeling faint</li> <li>• Feeling of impending doom</li> <li>• Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher</li> <li>• New or severe pain in your back or neck</li> </ul>
<p>Low Red Blood Cell (RBC) Count and Hemoglobin (Hgb) (Anemia)</p>	<p>Description: RBCs and Hgb carry oxygen to your body’s tissues and remove carbon dioxide. Low RBC or Hgb (anemia) can make you feel weak, very tired, or look pale.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.</li> <li>• Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do other dangerous activities if you are very tired.</li> <li>• Balance activity and rest — stay as active as you can, but rest when needed.</li> <li>• Eat a balanced diet and follow any nutrition or supplement advice from your care team.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Dizziness or fainting</li> <li>• Fast or irregular heartbeats</li> <li>• Sudden or severe headache</li> </ul>
<p>Liver Problems</p>	<p>Description: Treatment can cause liver injury. Your care team may check your liver with blood tests before and during treatment.</p> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellowing of your skin or the white part of your eyes (jaundice)</li> <li>• Severe nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen)</li> <li>• Dark, tea-colored urine</li> <li>• Bleeding or bruising more easily than normal</li> </ul>

<p>Rash or Itchy Skin</p>	<p>Description: Rash or itchy skin can cause redness, swelling, and a variety of bumps or patches (small red spots, welts, blisters, or scaly dry areas).</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep your skin moisturized with creams or lotions to reduce rash and itchiness; wear loose-fitting clothing.</li> <li>• Avoid perfumes and colognes, as they may worsen rash symptoms.</li> <li>• Limit time spent in heat to prevent worsening symptoms.</li> <li>• Avoid sun exposure, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM, to lower the risk of sunburn.</li> <li>• Wear long-sleeved clothing with UV protection and broad-brimmed hats.</li> <li>• Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB) with at least SPF 30 as directed.</li> <li>• Use lip balm that contains at least SPF 30.</li> <li>• Avoid tanning beds.</li> <li>• Your care team may recommend medicines for symptoms.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rash or itching that continues to worsen</li> </ul>
<p>Sensitivity to Sunlight (Photosensitivity)</p>	<p>Description: Sun sensitivity is when your skin becomes more reactive or sensitive to sunlight than usual. This can lead to conditions like sunburn, rashes, or other skin problems, even after short periods of exposure.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay out of the sun as much as you can to lower the risk of sunburn, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM when UV rays are strongest.</li> <li>• Wear long-sleeved shirts with UV protection if possible.</li> <li>• Use broad-brimmed hats for extra sun protection.</li> <li>• Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA/UVB) with at least SPF 30 as directed on the bottle.</li> <li>• Use lip balm with at least SPF 30.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe or painful sunburns</li> </ul>

<p>Hand-Foot Skin Reaction (HFSR)</p>	<p>Description: HFSR causes dryness, thickening, calluses, blisters, or cracking of the skin on the palms of your hands and soles of your feet.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep hands and feet moisturized with a non-scented moisturizing cream.</li> <li>• Applying urea 10% or 20% cream twice daily to the affected area may be helpful.</li> <li>• Avoid exposure to hot water on the hands and feet in showers or baths, or when doing dishes, as this may dry out the skin.</li> <li>• Avoid tight-fitting shoes or socks.</li> <li>• Avoid excessive rubbing of hands and feet unless applying lotion.</li> <li>• Wear gloves when working with your hands.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful blisters or calluses on your hands or feet</li> </ul>
<p>Hair Loss (Alopecia)</p>	<p>Description: Hair loss or thinning may begin days to weeks after treatment starts and usually grows back later. New growth can be a different color or texture and may not look the same as before.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a short haircut before treatment and use scarves, hats, or wigs for comfort and confidence.</li> <li>• Keep your head covered outdoors to protect it from the sun and cold; use sunscreen on your uncovered scalp.</li> <li>• Use gentle haircare: mild shampoo, soft brush, and avoid heat styling and harsh treatments.</li> <li>• Ask your care team about wig prescriptions or resources for head coverings.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No hair regrowth months after treatment ends</li> <li>• Concern about hair changes or need help finding a wig or support resources</li> </ul>

<p>Muscle, Bone, or Joint Pain</p>	<p>Description: Muscle pain is soreness, aching, cramps, stiffness, tenderness, or weakness in one or more muscles. Joint pain is pain, stiffness, swelling, or reduced movement where two bones meet.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a pain diary: note pain levels, locations, and activities that make it better or worse.</li> <li>• Do gentle exercise (walking, stretching, yoga) to maintain mobility and strength. Check with your care team before starting a new activity.</li> <li>• Use a warm compress for stiff muscles or a cold pack to reduce swelling and numb pain—use what helps the area.</li> <li>• Your care team may recommend or prescribe medicines, including over-the-counter pain relievers.</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain you cannot control with usual measures</li> <li>• Swelling, redness, or warmth in a joint</li> <li>• New weakness</li> <li>• Trouble walking or moving</li> </ul>
<p>Low Phosphate Levels in Your Blood (Hypophosphatemia)</p>	<p>Description: Treatment may cause low levels of phosphate in your blood. Your care team will do blood tests to check you for these changes and will treat you if needed.</p> <p>Talk to your care team if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New or worsening muscle weakness, cramps, or bone pain</li> <li>• Trouble breathing or shortness of breath</li> <li>• Confusion, slurred speech, or severe dizziness</li> <li>• Severe fatigue or inability to perform daily activities</li> </ul>

Select Rare Side Effects

Side Effect	Talk to Your Care Team if You Have Any of These Signs or Symptoms
<b>Severe Skin and Mouth Reactions (Boxed Warning)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Painful sores or ulcers on your skin, lips, or in your mouth</li> <li>Blisters</li> <li>Peeling skin</li> <li>Rash</li> <li>Pustules</li> </ul>
<b>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) Reactivation (Boxed Warning)</b>	<p>Before you start treatment, your care team will do blood tests to check for HBV infection. If you have had hepatitis B or are a carrier of hepatitis B virus, receiving rituximab could cause the virus to become an active infection again. Hepatitis B reactivation may cause serious liver problems, including liver failure and death. You should not receive rituximab if you have active hepatitis B liver disease. Your care team will monitor you for hepatitis B infection during and for several months after you stop receiving rituximab.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worsening tiredness</li> <li>Yellowing of your skin or white part of your eyes</li> </ul>
<b>Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML) (Boxed Warning)</b>	<p>PML is a rare, serious brain infection caused by a virus that can happen in people who receive rituximab. People with weakened immune systems can get PML. PML can result in death or severe disability. There is no known treatment, prevention, or cure for PML.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confusion</li> <li>Dizziness or loss of balance</li> <li>Difficulty walking or talking</li> <li>Decreased strength or weakness on one side of your body</li> <li>Vision problems</li> </ul>
Changes in the Electrical Activity of Your Heart called QT Prolongation	<p>QT prolongation can cause irregular heartbeats that can be life-threatening. Your care team should do tests before you start taking vemurafenib and during your treatment to check the electrical activity of your heart and your body salts (electrolytes).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feel faint, lightheaded, dizzy</li> <li>Fast or irregular heartbeat</li> </ul>
Kidney Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease in your amount of urine</li> <li>Blood in your urine</li> <li>Swelling of your ankles</li> <li>Loss of appetite</li> </ul>
Eye Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye pain, swelling, or redness</li> <li>Blurred vision or other vision changes</li> </ul>
Pancreas Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upper stomach pain that may spread to your back and get worse with eating</li> <li>Weight loss</li> <li>Nausea or vomiting</li> </ul>
Tumor Lysis Syndrome (TLS)	<p>Tumor lysis happens when cancer cells break apart and flood your bloodstream with chemicals and toxins faster than your body can get rid of them. TLS is a group of conditions that affect your heart, kidneys, and muscles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severe nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea</li> <li>Urinating smaller amounts or dark-colored urine</li> <li>Muscle cramps or twitching</li> <li>Rapid heartbeats or chest pain</li> <li>Confusion or weakness</li> <li>Seizures</li> </ul>
Risk of New Cancers	<p>There is a risk of developing new cancers during or after treatment. Talk with your care team about this risk, and ask about the signs and symptoms of new cancers.</p>

**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 2 weeks after your last dose of vemurafenib, and for 12 months after your last dose of rituximab.
  - If you think you might be pregnant or if you become pregnant, tell your care team right away.
  - If your partner is able to become pregnant, use an effective method of birth control—such as condoms—during treatment.
- **Do NOT breastfeed** during treatment, for 2 weeks after your last dose of vemurafenib, and for 6 months after your last dose of rituximab.

## 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.
- **Worsening side effects from radiation treatment.** Tell your care team if you have had or are planning to receive radiation therapy.
- **This Patient Education Sheet may not describe all possible side effects.**  
Call your care team 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.

This guide does not cover all existing information related to the possible uses, directions, doses, precautions, warnings, interactions, adverse effects, or risks associated with this medication and should not substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Provision of this guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring of this medication by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. All decisions related to taking this medication should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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