



Chapter 9: Getting ready for your treatment with **KEYTRUDA** and axitinib

This chapter is part of a series of materials.
For more information, and to access further
materials, please visit www.KEYTRUDA.co.uk

For patients being treated with KEYTRUDA® (pembrolizumab) in combination with axitinib for advanced renal cell carcinoma

Your healthcare team should have provided you with materials to help you identify any side effects you may experience on your treatment. Ensure you read the Patient Safety Information Brochure and carry your Patient Alert Card with you at all times.

It is important to be aware of side effects. Telling your healthcare professional straight away as soon as you notice any symptoms may stop them from becoming more serious.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DIAGNOSE OR TREAT SIDE EFFECTS YOURSELF.

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/> or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store. Adverse events should also be reported to Merck Sharp & Dohme Limited (tel: 01992 467272). By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.



Merck Sharp & Dohme (UK)
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GB-RCC-00186 September 2020
This material has been
developed by MSD UK.

Getting ready for your treatment with KEYTRUDA and axitinib

Is there anything I can do before my treatment starts?

As part of your treatment for advanced kidney cancer, your doctors have prescribed you 2 medicines:

- **KEYTRUDA** (also known as pembrolizumab), a medicine given by infusion, and
- Inlyta (also known as **axitinib**), which is taken orally.

You take these 2 treatments at the same time.

Before starting to take these medicines, it can help to make sure that you are as ready as you can be. You may start your treatment very quickly after your diagnosis and your healthcare team will give you all the information that you need in this time period.

You may find the additional few tips below helpful and, if you have any questions, ask your healthcare team.



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Taking care of your teeth and gums

- It is important to **visit your dentist** for a check-up **before** beginning your treatment
- Remember to tell your dentist about the medicines you are going to take as this can help them understand any potential side effects that might happen
- If you are going to have dental treatment (for example root canal work or fillings) this should be done **before starting treatment**. Tell your healthcare team if your dentist has recommended any dental treatment
- Make sure that you brush your teeth twice a day as this can help prevent bleeding gums. It can also help to use a soft tooth brush, alcohol-free mouthwash and a mild toothpaste



Following a healthy, balanced meal plan

- Following a healthy meal plan can help you maintain your strength. For more information, download **Chapter 7: Living with kidney cancer**



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Being active

- Being active can make you feel better because it releases hormones that make you feel good
- Staying active can also boost your energy levels and build a routine, which can help you prepare for some possible side effects, such as tiredness
- Being active doesn't have to mean running marathons. 30 minutes of moderate activity, such as walking or housework, can help boost your fitness
- Before starting exercise, discuss this with your healthcare professional and develop an exercise plan that is suitable for you



Stopping smoking

If you smoke, stopping is the healthiest decision you can make in the days leading up to your treatment

- Stopping smoking has been shown to improve your overall health
- Trying to stop smoking can be very difficult, especially when dealing with the stress of cancer, so talk to a healthcare professional or an **NHS support service** for the best chance of success.
- Visit **www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking** to learn more (external website*)



*This external link will take you to a third-party website. We do not review or control the content of any third-party site. We do not endorse and are not responsible for the accuracy, content, practices, or standards of any third-party sources.

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Could it help to have anything at home?

Before you start your treatment, it can be helpful to have key items in your house as these may help with some of the possible side effects. You can speak to your doctor if you have any questions about these items.

Tympanic (ear) thermometer to check your temperature to see if you have an infection



Mild toothpaste, a soft toothbrush and alcohol-free mouthwash to prevent bleeding gums



Epsom salts (for soaking your feet) and preventing cracked skin



Cotton socks or padded insoles for your shoes



Moisturiser and urea-based creams for your hands, skin and face

An electronic blood pressure monitor to check your blood pressure at home

Gloves for housework, gardening or for manual work

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Do I have to book my first infusion?



After your doctor prescribes your treatment, a member of your healthcare team will help you to book your first appointment for a KEYTRUDA infusion.

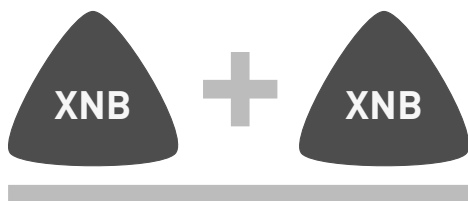
Your treatment with KEYTRUDA and axitinib consists of 2 separate medicines.

You'll get KEYTRUDA in your vein through an intravenous drip, or infusion, **every 3 weeks**. It takes **about 30 minutes** to get each infusion.

Axitinib (XNB) is a red tablet which you take by mouth **2 times a day, 12 hours apart**. The standard axitinib tablet is a 5 mg dose and has a triangular shape.

Sometimes, doctors may change to a different dose of axitinib, which will have a different shaped tablet. Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will let you know the exact dose of axitinib that you will receive and how to take them.

1–4 days before each KEYTRUDA infusion, you will have a blood test to make sure you are well enough to receive your treatment. Depending on the results of your blood test you may have to pause or stop your treatment. Your healthcare team will let you know when and where your blood test will be.



12 hours apart



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Regularly attending a hospital to get your KEYTRUDA infusions can be overwhelming and leave you with lots of practical questions about how to fit these appointments into your daily life.

Below are some questions about your infusion that you might want to ask your healthcare team when booking your appointment. They can help explain the process and allow you to plan ahead.

This is not a full list and everyone has different questions, so think about what you would find most useful.

- Q:** How long do I have to arrive at the hospital before my first appointment?
- Q:** Can I bring someone with me?
- Q:** Do I need to do anything to prepare for the infusion?
- Q:** Can I eat and/or drink before my infusion?
- Q:** How long will I have to stay at the hospital after my infusion?
- Q:** How will I feel immediately afterwards?

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- Q:** Can I drive home from the hospital?
- Q:** Can I do activities or go back to work after my infusion appointment?
- Q:** Can I reschedule my infusion appointment if I am busy or away?
- Q:** Can I schedule my appointment for the same day that I pick up my axitinib tablets?

References

1. Macmillan Cancer Support. Available at <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/> (Accessed September 2020)
2. Cancer Research UK. Available at <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/> (Accessed September 2020)
3. INLYTA. Summary of Product Characteristics. (Last updated November 2019)
4. KEYTRUDA 50 mg powder for concentrate for solution for infusion - Summary of Product Characteristics (Last updated August 2020)

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