

## Patient Treatment Information

# Sunitinib

---

Your chemotherapy treatment is called sunitinib (soon-IT-in-ib) or Sutent (SOO-tent). It is commonly used to treat advanced renal cell carcinoma as well as gastrointestinal stromal tumors (GIST). It has also been used to treat other diseases. Sunitinib is a new type of drug that targets cancer cells more precisely than chemotherapy drugs. It works both by blocking tumor cells from growing and by stopping new blood vessels (which bring nutrients and oxygen to the tumor to help it grow) from forming.

### What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Treatment?

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any prescription or over-the-counter products you are taking, including dietary supplements, vitamins, herbal medicines and homeopathic remedies.

Use an effective birth control method while you are being treated. Sunitinib can cause harm to a fetus, so be sure to tell your healthcare provider right away if you or your partner become pregnant.

Avoid breastfeeding during treatment. It is not known if sunitinib passes into breast milk.

Some drugs can cause sterility. Talk with your healthcare provider about your options if you want to have children in the future.

Do not get any immunizations or vaccinations while you are being treated without the approval of your healthcare provider.

### What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Sunitinib?

Sunitinib can cause heart problems. Tell your doctor if you have shortness of breath, swollen ankles or feet, heart palpitations, or if you feel more tired than usual.

Sunitinib can cause high blood pressure. If you develop high blood pressure, your healthcare provider may give you medicine to help treat it.

Sunitinib can cause nosebleeds. Most nosebleeds are minor, and usually stop on their own. If you have a nosebleed, sit with your head tipped slightly forward, and pinch the bridge of your nose. Call your healthcare provider if you feel dizzy or faint or if the bleeding doesn't stop after 10 to 15 minutes.

Sunitinib can cause bleeding in your stomach or bowel. Tell your healthcare provider if you have a swollen or painful abdomen, black or bloody stools or if you vomit blood.

Sunitinib can cause bleeding in your gums and wound bleeding. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any bleeding.

Your treatment can interact with other substances, including:

- Drugs used to treat TB and other infections, such as rifampin or rifabutin
- Drugs used to treat seizures, such as phenytoin, phenobarbital and carbamazepine
- Steroids, such as dexamethasone
- St. John's Wort
- Drugs used to treat fungal infections, such as ketoconazole, fluconazole, voriconazole or itraconazole
- Calcium channel blockers, such as diltiazem, verapamil or nifedipine
- Antibiotics, such as clarithromycin and erythromycin
- Grapefruit and grapefruit juice
- Drugs used to treat HIV, such as ritonavir, delavirdine, atazanavir, indinavir, saquinavir and efavirenz
- Drugs used to treat depression, such as nefazodone
- Cimetidine (Tagamet)

**You should not take this treatment if you are allergic to sunitinib or any of its components.**

## How Is the Treatment Given?

You can take sunitinib with or without food. Try to take sunitinib at around the same time every day. If you miss a dose, skip it and take the next dose as scheduled. Do not take two doses of sunitinib at the same time to catch up after missing a dose.

Your treatment is usually given in a 6-week cycle. Sunitinib should be taken once every day for the first 4 weeks (days 1-28); then it should be stopped for the next 2 weeks (days 29-42) to complete the cycle. Following this, the next 6-week cycle begins.

It is important to take sunitinib exactly as prescribed. Do not stop the medicine or change the dose without talking with your healthcare provider.

Store sunitinib at room temperature away from children and pets. If you take too much sunitinib, contact your healthcare provider, local poison control center or emergency room right away.

## What Are the Important Side Effects?

All drugs can cause side effects, but every person reacts differently to each drug. The following chart lists important side effects that can occur with your treatment, how often the side effect occurs (common, less common or rare), how to recognize and minimize side effects and possible treatments. Call your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about side effects.

<b>Potential Side Effects</b>	<b>How to Minimize Side Effects</b>	<b>Possible Treatments</b>
<p><b>Nausea/Vomiting (Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling queasy or sick to your stomach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast.</li> <li>• Eat food cold or at room temperature so the smell of food will not bother you.</li> <li>• Avoid fried, spicy or fatty foods.</li> <li>• Eat and drink slowly.</li> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids during the day, but to avoid bloating, do not drink during meals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will be given medicine to help reduce nausea and vomiting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diarrhea (Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose or watery stools several times a day</li> <li>• Abdominal cramping, gas and bloating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast.</li> <li>• Avoid caffeine; alcohol; raw fruits and vegetables; raw eggs; undercooked meats; spicy, fatty and greasy foods; milk and dairy products; foods that cause gas, such as beans and other legumes; high fiber and high-fat foods; foods left un-refrigerated for more than two hours (one hour for egg dishes and cream or mayonnaise-based foods); bulk laxatives; and stool softeners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink eight to ten glasses of clear liquids every day.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine to help treat diarrhea.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mouth Sores and Pain (Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain, swelling and redness of the mouth, tongue and throat</li> <li>• “Coated tongue”</li> <li>• Difficulty talking, swallowing or eating</li> <li>• Bleeding ulcers and infection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brush teeth two to four times a day using a soft bristle brush and fluoride toothpaste.</li> <li>• Use non-waxed dental floss daily.</li> <li>• Ask your healthcare provider to recommend a mouthwash that does not contain alcohol.</li> <li>• Sip water during the day and use sugar-free candy or gum to keep your mouth wet.</li> <li>• Eat food cold or at room temperature.</li> <li>• Eat soft or pureed food.</li> <li>• Avoid food that is acidic, spicy, salty, dry or rough, such as toast.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to help treat pain.</li> <li>• You may be given medicine to treat fungal or viral infections.</li> </ul>

Potential Side Effects	How to Minimize Side Effects	Possible Treatments
<p><b>Anorexia or Appetite Loss (Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not having an appetite</li> <li>• Feeling too nauseous to eat</li> <li>• Metallic or medicinal taste</li> <li>• Change in taste causing dislike for certain foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try eating six to eight small meals or snacks each day instead of three larger meals.</li> <li>• Vary your diet and try new foods and recipes.</li> <li>• Take a walk before meals, when possible. This may make you feel hungrier.</li> <li>• Eat with friends or family. When eating alone, listen to the radio or watch TV.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook dinners ahead of time and freeze them in small portions so that cooking smells are minimized.</li> <li>• Let others help with food, but ask that foods be prepared in small portions that can be frozen. And don't hesitate to let them know which foods to avoid.</li> <li>• Add mild spices to change flavor.</li> <li>• It might be helpful to have a program, such as Meals on Wheels, deliver food to you.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anemia (Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue or weakness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Pale skin</li> <li>• Feeling out of breath</li> <li>• Feeling cold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan rest periods throughout the day.</li> <li>• Organize daily activities so that you conserve your energy.</li> <li>• Try to eat a well balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.</li> <li>• Stand up slowly to avoid getting dizzy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your red blood cell count.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your dose or delay further treatment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bleeding (Less Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual bleeding, easy bruising</li> <li>• Black or tar-like stools</li> <li>• Blood in your urine</li> <li>• Pinpoint red spots on your skin</li> <li>• Bleeding gums or nosebleeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid aspirin and aspirin-like drugs, such as ibuprofen.</li> <li>• Use caution with sharp objects, such as razors and nail cutters.</li> <li>• Avoid activities that can cause cuts, bumps and bruises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your platelet count.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your dose or delay further treatment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hand-Foot Syndrome (Less Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swelling or redness in the hands and feet that can prevent normal activity</li> <li>• Cracked or peeling skin</li> <li>• Tingling, numbness or pain in the hands or soles of the feet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear gloves to wash dishes.</li> <li>• Avoid using harsh household cleaners.</li> <li>• Avoid prolonged exposure to heat or pressure.</li> <li>• Use creams or moisturizers regularly. Try covering your hands with cotton gloves.</li> <li>• Avoid perfume, cologne or aftershave since these products can be irritating to the skin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your healthcare provider may prescribe a cream to help with skin reactions.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your dose or delay further treatment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Constipation (Less Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in passing stools</li> <li>• Decrease in the normal frequency of bowel movements</li> <li>• Small, hard dry stools</li> <li>• Bloating, gas, cramps and pain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids to help loosen your bowels. Drink warm or hot liquids if you do not have mouth sores.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may suggest eating foods that are high in fiber, such as bran, vegetables, whole wheat breads and fruit. Add prunes or prune juice, which act like laxatives.</li> <li>• Exercise can help loosen bowels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your healthcare provider may recommend a stool softener.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infection (Less Common)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever and chills</li> <li>• Painful urination</li> <li>• Sore throat and cough</li> <li>• Nasal congestion</li> <li>• Swelling or redness of the skin at the site of a wound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands often.</li> <li>• Brush and floss your teeth daily.</li> <li>• Clean cuts right away with warm water, soap and antiseptic.</li> <li>• When your white blood cell count is low, stay away from crowds and people with colds or other illnesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be given medicine to increase your white blood cell count.</li> <li>• You may be given an antibiotic to treat or prevent infection.</li> <li>• Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.</li> </ul>



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Disclaimer.** The drug information presented is time-sensitive and current as of the date stated below. It is not a substitute for the expertise, skill, knowledge and judgment of healthcare practitioners. Additional, important information about this product, including “black box” warnings and precautions, is available from the manufacturer and other sources. ONMARK PROVIDES THIS DRUG INFORMATION ON AN “AS IS” BASIS. ALL WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE ARE DISCLAIMED.

**Limitation of Liability.** Onmark shall not be liable for any improper or incorrect use of the information described and contained herein and assumes no responsibility for anyone's use of the information. IN NO EVENT SHALL ONMARK BE LIABLE FOR ANY DIRECT, INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, SPECIAL, EXEMPLARY, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PROCUREMENT OR SUBSTITUTE GOODS OR SERVICES; LOSS OF USE, DATA OR PROFITS; OR BUSINESS INTERRUPTION) HOWEVER CAUSED AND ON ANY THEORY OF LIABILITY, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, STRICT LIABILITY, OR TORT (INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE) ARISING IN ANY WAY OUT OF THE USE OF THIS INFORMATION, EVEN IF ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

This document is a complimentary service provided by Onmark for its members. [www.onmarkservices.com](http://www.onmarkservices.com)  
© 2007 Onmark, Inc. Onmark is a trademark of Oncology Therapeutics Network

June 2007