Zanubrutinib (Brukinsa™)

Pronounced: ZAN-ue-BROO-ti-nib

Classification: Kinase Inhibitor

About Zanubrutinib (Brukinsa™)

A kinase is an enzyme that promotes cell growth. There are many types of kinases, which control different phases of cell growth. By blocking a particular enzyme from working, this medication can slow the growth of cancer cells.

How to Take Zanubrutinib

This medication comes in capsule form to be taken by mouth and should be swallowed whole with a glass of water. The capsule should not be broken, opened, or chewed. It can be taken with or without food. If you miss your dose, take the next dose as soon as you remember and then return to your normal schedule the next day.

It is important to make sure you are taking the correct amount of medication every time. Before every dose, check that what you are taking matches what you have been prescribed.

The blood levels of this medication can be affected by certain foods and medications, so they should be avoided. These include: grapefruit, grapefruit juice, itraconazole, voriconazole, posaconazole, fluconazole, isavuconazole, clarithromycin, diltiazem, erythromycin, rifampin, and omeprazole, among others. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about all medications and supplements you take. Your dose of zanubrutinib may be reduced if you are taking certain other medications.

This medication can also cause Hepatitis B reactivation in patients who have previously had hepatitis. Be sure your healthcare provider is aware of previous Hepatitis B diagnosis and treatment. You may also be given prophylactic medications for herpes simplex virus and pneumocystis jiroveci pneumonia.

Storage and Handling

Store your medication in the original, labeled container at room temperature and in a dry location (unless otherwise directed by your healthcare provider or pharmacist). Keep containers out of reach of children and pets.

If a caregiver prepares your dose for you, they should consider wearing gloves or pour the pills directly from their container into the cap, a small cup, or directly into your hand. They should avoid touching the pills. They should always wash their hands before and after giving you the medication. Pregnant or nursing women should not prepare the dose for you. Ask your oncology team where to return any unused medication for disposal. Do not flush down the toilet or throw in the trash.

Where do I get this medication?

Certain cancer medications, including zanubrutinib, are only available through specialty pharmacies. If you need to get this medication through a specialty pharmacy, your provider will help you start this process. Where you can fill your prescriptions may also be influenced by your pharmaceutical insurance coverage. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist for assistance in identifying where you can get this medication.

Insurance Information

This medication may be covered under your prescription drug plan. Depending on your diagnosis and fund availability, co-pay...
assistance from private foundations may be available. Patient assistance may be available to qualifying individuals, depending on your prescription drug coverage. Co-pay cards, which reduce the patent co-pay responsibility for eligible commercially (non-government sponsored) insured patients may also be available. Your care team can help you find these resources, if they are available.

Possible Side Effects of Zanubrutinib

There are a number of things you can do to manage the side effects of zanubrutinib. Talk to your care team about these recommendations. They can help you decide what will work best for you. These are some of the most common or important side effects:

Infection and Low White Blood Cell Count (Leukopenia or Neutropenia)

This medication can cause life-threatening infections, with or without a decrease in white blood cell counts.

White blood cells (WBC) are important for fighting infection. While receiving treatment, your WBC count can drop, putting you at a higher risk of getting an infection. You should let your doctor or nurse know right away if you have a fever (temperature greater than 100.4°F or 38°C), sore throat or cold, shortness of breath, cough, burning with urination, or a sore that doesn’t heal.

Tips to preventing infection:

- Washing hands, both yours and your visitors, is the best way to prevent the spread of infection.
- Avoid large crowds and people who are sick (i.e.: those who have a cold, fever or cough or live with someone with these symptoms).
- When working in your yard, wear protective clothing including long pants and gloves.
- Do not handle pet waste.
- Keep all cuts or scratches clean.
- Shower or bath daily and perform frequent mouth care.
- Do not cut cuticles or ingrown nails. You may wear nail polish, but not fake nails.
- Ask your oncology care team before scheduling dental appointments or procedures.
- Ask your oncology care team before you, or someone you live with has any vaccinations.

Low Platelet Count (Thrombocytopenia)

Platelets help your blood clot, so when the count is low you are at a higher risk of bleeding. Let your oncology care team know if you have any excess bruising or bleeding, including nose bleeds, bleeding gums, or blood in your urine or stool. If the platelet count becomes too low, you may receive a transfusion of platelets.

- Do not use a razor (an electric razor is fine).
- Avoid contact sports and activities that can result in injury or bleeding.
- Do not take aspirin (salicylic acid), non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs) such as Motrin/Advil (ibuprofen), Aleve (naproxen), Celebrex (celecoxib) etc. as these can all increase the risk of bleeding. Please consult with your healthcare team regarding use of these agents and all over the counter medications/supplements while on therapy.
- Do not floss or use toothpicks and use a soft-bristle toothbrush to brush your teeth.

In rare cases this medication can cause severe bleeding, also known as hemorrhage. You should contact your provider right away if you have any signs of bleedings already stated or any confusion, change in your speech or a headache that won’t go away. If you are scheduled to have surgery you will likely need to stop taking this medication for a period of time. Your provider will tell you when you should stop the medication and when you should resume.

Low Red Blood Cell Count (Anemia)

Your red blood cells are responsible for carrying oxygen to the tissues in your body. When the red cell count is low, you may feel tired or weak. You should let your oncology care team know if you experience any shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or pain in your chest. If the count gets too low, you may receive a blood transfusion.

Rash
Some patients may develop a rash. Use an alcohol-free moisturizer on your skin and lips; avoid moisturizers with perfumes or scents. Your oncology care team can recommend a topical medication if itching is bothersome. If your skin does crack or bleed, be sure to keep the area clean to avoid infection. Be sure to notify your oncology care team of any rash that develops, as this can be a reaction. They can give you more tips on caring for your skin.

**Diarrhea**

Your oncology care team can recommend medications to relieve diarrhea. Also, try eating low-fiber, bland foods, such as white rice and boiled or baked chicken. Avoid raw fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads, cereals and seeds. Soluble fiber is found in some foods and absorbs fluid, which can help relieve diarrhea. Foods high in soluble fiber include: applesauce, bananas (ripe), canned fruit, orange sections, boiled potatoes, white rice, products made with white flour, oatmeal, cream of rice, cream of wheat, and farina. Drink 8-10 glasses on non-alcoholic, un-caffeinated fluid a day to prevent dehydration.

**Less common, but important side effects can include:**

- **Heart Problems:** This medication can cause fast or abnormal heartbeats or an abnormal heart rhythm, either atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter. Notify your oncology care team right away if you feel abnormal heartbeats or if you feel like your heart is beating fast or irregularly, dizzy, faint, have shortness of breath, or chest discomfort.

- **Muscle or Joint Pain/Aches:** Your doctor or nurse can recommend medication and other strategies to relieve pain.

- **Secondary Cancers:** A secondary cancer is one that develops as a result of cancer treatment for another cancer. This is quite rare, but you should be aware of the risk. This can occur years after treatment. This is most often associated with repeated treatments or high doses. Your provider will monitor your labs closely. Consider having a complete blood count with differential checked annually by your healthcare provider if you received high-risk therapies. There is a very low risk of developing non melanoma skin cancer due to treatment with this medication, which can occur many years after treatment. Because this medication has been associated with the development of skin cancers, it is important to practice sun safety. Avoid the sun between 10-2pm, when it is strongest. Wear sunscreen (at least SPF 15) everyday; wear sunglasses, a hat and long sleeves/pants to protect your skin and seek out shade whenever possible.

**Reproductive Concerns**

Exposure of an unborn child to this medication could cause birth defects, so you should not become pregnant or father a child while on this medication. Effective birth control is necessary during treatment and for at least 1 week after your last dose for both women and men. Even if your menstrual cycle stops or you believe you are not producing sperm, you could still be fertile and conceive. You should not breastfeed while taking this medication or for 2 weeks after your last dose.

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