

INTRAVENOUS CANCER TREATMENT EDUCATION



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RAMUCIRUMAB PLUS PACLITAXEL

Name of the regimen and cancer drugs

- Ramucirumab (RA-myoo-SIR-yoo-mab): Cyramza®
- Paclitaxel (PA-klih-TAK-sil): Taxol

Common uses

This regimen is most commonly used for stomach cancer or cancer where the stomach and esophagus meet, but may be used for other diagnoses.

Treatment schedule

Your treatment will be given into your vein through an intravenous (IV) line. This may be into a short, flexible temporary catheter in your arm, or through a central venous catheter. A central venous catheter, or central line is a long, flexible IV tube that empties into a very large vein next to the heart. Talk with your care team to see which will be best for you and your treatment.

Each ramucirumab plus paclitaxel treatment is repeated every 28 days. This is known as one cycle. Your treatment may be given for a set number of cycles, or it will keep going until the drug stops working or you have side effects which stop you from continuing treatment.

- Ramucirumab IV is given on Day 1 and 15
- Paclitaxel IV given on Days 1, 8, and 15

Drug	DAY	1	2	3	4	...	8	...	15	...	28	Cycle 2 Day 1
Ramucirumab												
Paclitaxel												

Other medications

Other medications may be ordered for you to prevent or treat certain side effects. These include:

	Instructions:
Medications to prevent allergic reactions	<p>You may receive medications to prevent infusion related reactions prior to starting your cancer treatment.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Medications to prevent side effects	<p>You may receive medications to prevent side effects just before your cancer treatment. You may also get prescriptions for other medications to take at home as below:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

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Possible drug interactions

- Ramucirumab plus paclitaxel may interact with other drugs you are taking. Please inform your care providers of all prescription medicine, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal products that you take.
- Tell your care provider and dentist if you are taking medication to strengthen your bones while receiving ramucirumab
- Talk with your care provider or pharmacist before taking new medications, supplements, or receiving any vaccines.
- Grapefruit or grapefruit juice may interact with paclitaxel. Avoid eating or drinking these during your treatment

Common Side Effects

Common side effects that have been known to happen in patients receiving ramucirumab plus paclitaxel are listed in the left side of this table. In some instances, the side effects may be reported less often but are still important to discuss. This table does not list all the known side effects for this therapy, only the ones that are experienced most often. Not every patient experiences every known side effect of a drug; even if you are taking the same drug as another patient, you may experience different side effects. Options to help manage any side effects that do occur are included on the right side of this table. These should be discussed with your care provider. If you experience any side effect you cannot manage or that is not listed here, contact your care provider.

Possible Side Effect	Management
<p>Decreased white blood cells (WBCs) and increased risk for infection</p>	<p>Your WBCs should be monitored by a simple blood test. When your WBCs are low, you are at a greater risk of having an infection. Take the following precautions to protect yourself from infection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often, especially before eating and after using the bathroom. • Avoid crowds and people with fevers, flu, or other infection. • Bathe often for good personal hygiene. <p>Contact your care team if you experience any signs or symptoms of an infection such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (temperature more than 100.4°F or 38°C) • Chills • Sore throat • Burning when peeing • Tiredness that is worse than normal • A sore that becomes red, is draining, or does not heal. <p>Check with your care team before taking any medicine for a fever or chills.</p>

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Possible Side Effect	Management
<p>Decreased hemoglobin, part of the red blood cells that carry iron and oxygen</p>	<p>Your hemoglobin should be checked by a simple blood test. When your hemoglobin is low, you may notice that you get tired or fatigued more easily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night • Avoid operating heavy machinery if you feel too tired • Find a balance between “work” and “rest” • Stay as active as possible, but know that it is okay to rest as needed, too • You might notice that you are more pale than usual <p>Let your care team know right away if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath • Dizziness • Fast or abnormal heartbeat
<p>Fatigue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be more tired than usual or have less energy • Stay as active as possible, but know it is okay to rest as needed • Try to do some type of moderate activity every day • Conserve your energy. Plan your activities and do them at a time of day when you feel a bit more energetic • Follow a healthy diet and stay hydrated • Accept help from family and friends • Find healthy ways to manage stress, such as meditation, journaling, yoga, and guided imagery • Develop good sleeping habits, limit napping during the day to help you sleep better at night • Avoid operating heavy machinery if you feel too tired • Contact your care team if you experience extreme fatigue that prevents you from doing your normal daily activities
<p>Numbness or tingling in hands and feet</p>	<p>Report changes in your sense of touch, such as a burning feeling, pain on the skin or weakness. Notify your care team as soon as these symptoms develop. Early intervention can limit and resolve these symptoms, but if not addressed these symptoms can become permanent.</p>
<p>Bleeding</p>	<p>You may be at a higher risk of bleeding while taking ramucirumab plus paclitaxel. Be sure to seek medical attention right away if you have any major bleeding. Also be sure to check for any signs of bleeding in your stool.</p>
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Possible Side Effect	Management
<p>Decreased appetite or weight loss</p>	<p>Talk to your care team if you notice a weight loss while taking this medication.</p> <p>When you do not feel like eating, try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small frequent meals instead of 3 large meals each day. • Keep snacks nearby so you can eat when you feel hungry. • Liquid nutritional supplements. • Drink 8-10 glasses of water or fluid each day, especially if you are not eating, unless your care team has instructed you to limit your fluid intake.
<p>Abdominal pain</p>	<p>Abdominal pain/discomfort may occur. Report any serious pain or symptoms to your care team right away.</p>
<p>Nausea or vomiting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take all medications as prescribed to help prevent and lessen symptoms of nausea and vomiting. • Eat and drink slowly. • Drink 8-10 (8-ounce) glasses of water and/or fluid (soup or broth) each day unless your care team has instructed you to limit your fluid intake. • Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day rather than a few large meals. • Eat bland foods; avoid spicy, fried, and greasy foods. • Avoid intense exercise immediately after eating. • Don't lay down right away after eating. • Wear loose fitting clothing for comfort. • Avoid strong odors. Consider getting fresh air and try deep breathing. <p>Let your care team know if you have nausea or vomiting. Your care team may prescribe medication to help with the symptoms.</p>
<p>Increased blood pressure</p>	<p>Take your blood pressure often. Record your blood pressure in a diary and report these to your care team. Contact your care team for high blood pressure or if the following symptoms occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Dizziness • Chest pain • Shortness of breath • Fluid retention, weight gain, or swelling

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Possible Side Effect	Management
<p>Hair loss (alopecia)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hair will likely grow back after treatment is completed, although the color and/or texture may be different. • It may take 3 to 6 months after therapy is completed to resume normal hair growth. • Some people choose to wear scarves, caps, or wigs. A short haircut prior to treatment may help with stress of hair loss. • Partial or complete hair loss is likely, usually 1-2 weeks after start of therapy. This hair loss can be all body hair. • Be sure to keep your head covered to protect it from the sun during the summer and cold during the winter. • If not covering your scalp during the summer months, be sure to use sunscreen when spending time outdoors.
<p>Diarrhea (loose and/or urgent bowel movements)</p>	<p>Monitor how many bowel movements you have each day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink 8-10 (8-ounce) glasses of water or fluid each day unless your care team has asked you to limit your fluid intake. • Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day rather than a few large meals. • Eat bland, low-fiber foods (such as bananas, applesauce, potatoes, chicken, rice, and toast). • Avoid high fiber foods, such as raw vegetables and fruits and whole grains. • Avoid foods that cause gas, such as broccoli and beans. • Avoid foods with lactose, such as yogurt and milk. • Avoid spicy, fried, and greasy foods. <p>Contact your care team if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of bowel movements you have in a day increases by 4 or more • You feel dizzy or lightheaded <p>Talk with your care team if you believe you have diarrhea. They may recommend an over-the-counter medication or prescribe something to help keep it under control.</p>
<p>Muscle or joint pain or weakness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a diary of your pain including when and where the pain happens, what it feels like, and how long it lasts • Stay as active as possible, but know that it is okay to rest as needed, too • Tell your care team if pain limits what you can do <p>If the pain or weakness bothers you, ask your provider what you may use to help with this discomfort. Take only pain medication that has been prescribed or recommended by your care team.</p>
<p>Nail changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nails on fingers and toes may look swollen and reddened and may grow ridges • Skin/Nail changes: report any rashes, dryness or scaling to care provider, use mild soaps and rinse well, avoid hot water, use alcohol free oil-based moisturizers, report any darkening or peeling skin or any changes to the nail • Usually this change starts at the cuticle and may affect the skin around the nail • Wear gloves when cleaning or doing dishes, or working in the garden • Keep nails trimmed and hands clean • Biting, chewing, or picking at your nails can increase the risk of getting an infection • Talk to your care team if you notice any changes in your nails

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Rare but serious side effects

- Infusion Reaction - Ramucirumab plus paclitaxel can rarely cause an infusion reaction. During your treatment, let the nurse know right away if any of these symptoms happen: chills or shaking, dizziness, fever, itchiness or rash, flushing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, throat irritation, cough, congestion, sudden back pain, or feeling faint.
- Vesicant extravasation – Ramucirumab and paclitaxel is a vesicant. If it leaks outside of the IV, it can cause severe damage to your skin. Notify your nurse right away if you feel any pain, aching, burning, itching, swelling, or redness at the site of your IV.
- Bowel perforation - Tell your doctor right away if you get high fever, nausea, vomiting, severe abdominal pain
- Wound healing problems – If you need to have a surgical or dental procedure, tell your doctor that you are taking ramucirumab. Ramucirumab may need to be stopped until your wound heals after some types of surgery
- Renal Failure/Proteinuria – Ramucirumab plus paclitaxel may be harmful to your kidneys. Speak to your care team to know when you need to have laboratory tests done to monitor your kidneys.
- Heart Failure – Ramucirumab plus paclitaxel can cause heart failure. Report symptoms related to swelling and shortness of breath to your care team.
- Arterial Thrombosis – Ramucirumab plus paclitaxel can increase your risk of having a blood clot.

If you experience ANY new, worsening, or uncontrolled side effects, call your care team immediately.

(INSTITUTIONAL CONTACT INFO)

Handling body fluids and waste

Some of the drugs you receive may be present in urine, stool, sweat, or vomit for many days after treatment. Many cancer drugs are toxic, your bodily waste may also be toxic and can be dangerous to come into contact with. Once you have started ramucirumab plus paclitaxel, follow the instructions below for at least two days after your treatment. This is to keep you, your loved ones, and the environment as safe as possible.

- Pregnant women should avoid touching anything that may be soiled with body fluids from the patient.
- Toilet and septic systems
 - You may use the same toilet, septic tank, and/or sewer that you usually use. If you have a low-flow toilet, close the lid and flush twice to ensure that all waste has been discarded.
- If the toilet or toilet seat becomes soiled with urine, stool, or vomit, clean the surface after every use before other people use the toilet.
- Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet for at least 20 seconds.
- If you need a bedpan, be sure your caregiver knows to wear gloves to assist with cleanup and to wash the bedpan with soap and water every day.
- If you do not have good control of bladder or bowels, use a disposable pad with a plastic back, a diaper, or a sheet to absorb body waste.
- Wash any skin that has been exposed to body waste with soap and water.
- Linens or clothing that are soiled with body fluids or body waste should be washed separately from other linens and clothing. If you do not have a washer, place the soiled linens in a plastic bag until they can be washed.
- Wash hands with soap and water after touching linens or clothing that may be soiled with body fluids.

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Intimacy, sexual activity, contraception, and fertility

This treatment may cause changes that can affect intimacy and sexuality, including desire and body image. Maintaining physical closeness and/or intimacy with loved ones can be continued during treatment. Holding hands, hugging, and kissing can be done safely. It is recommended that you talk to your care team about any restrictions or questions you may have.

Some treatments can influence the ability to have children, also known as fertility. If you're interested in preserving fertility, talk to your care team before treatment. Ask your healthcare provider to determine when it is safe to become pregnant after your treatment. Patients of reproductive ability should not become pregnant or get their partners pregnant while receiving ramucirumab plus paclitaxel. Some of the drugs you receive may be present in semen and vaginal secretion for many days after treatment. You should use barrier devices, such as condoms, during sexual activity to limit exposure to body fluids.

- Talk to your care team about birth control. Not all options may be right for your treatment or cancer. Effective contraception could include one or more of the following: barrier methods (e.g. condoms), hormone methods (e.g. birth control pills), or surgery.
- Tell your care team if you become pregnant or plan to breastfeed.

Additional resources

Product website: [What is Gastric Cancer | Advanced Stomach & GEJ Cancer | CYRAMZA® \(ramucirumab\)](#)

Prescribing information link: [Advanced or Metastatic Gastric or GEJ Adenocarcinoma Treatment | CYRAMZA® \(ramucirumab\)](#)

Product resources: [Financial Assistance: Lilly Oncology Support Center | CYRAMZA® \(ramucirumab\)](#)

Additional instructions

Updated – May 9, 2023

Important notice: The Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC), Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA), National Community Oncology Dispensing Association, 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 therapy 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 therapy 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 therapy by ACCC, HOPA, NCODA, or ONS, who assume no liability for and cannot ensure the accuracy of the information presented. The collaborators are not making any representations with respect to the medications whatsoever, and any and all decisions, with respect to such medications, are at the sole risk of the individual receiving therapy. All decisions related to receiving this therapy should be made with the guidance and under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.

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