



MASCC™ TEACHING TOOL FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING ORAL AGENTS FOR CANCER

This teaching tool has been prepared to assist health care providers in the assessment and education of patients receiving oral agents as treatment for their cancer. The goal is to ensure that patients know and understand their treatment and the importance of taking the pills/tablets are prescribed.

The following are aspects that impact the adherence to treatment with oral agents (pills/tablets) for cancer

- Patient Characteristics
- Drug
- Disease
- Treatment Plan

Include family member or other healthcare provider in this information.

KEY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1) What have you been told about this treatment plan with oral medications?

** Verify that the patient knows that these oral agents are for cancer and are taken by mouth for their cancer.*

2) What other medications or pills do you take by mouth?

** If you have a list of medicines, go over the list with the patient.*

** If you do not have a list, ask the patient what medicines he/she is taking, (both prescription and non-prescription), herbs, complementary, or other treatments.*

3) Are you able to swallow pills or tablets? If no, explain.

4) Are you able to read the drug label/information?

5) Are you able to open your other medicine bottles or packages?

6) Have you taken other pills for your cancer?

** Find out if there were any problems, for example, taking the medications or any adverse drug effects.*

7) Are you experiencing any symptoms that would affect your ability to keep down the pills, for example nausea or vomiting?

8) How will you fill your prescription?

** Delays in obtaining the pills may affect when the oral drugs are started*

9) Have you had any problems with your insurance that has interfered with our obtaining your medications?

Special Considerations when assessing patients receiving oral agents for cancer:

When teaching the patient, you may need to adapt your teaching to accommodate special considerations such as, age, feeding tube, vision problems/color blindness, dietary issues, mental problems (dementia, depression, cognitive impairments).

** Recommended information to assess is noted in italics*

PATIENT EDUCATION

Generic Education for All Oral Drugs

Discuss the following items with the patient and/or caretaker.

- 1) Inform any other doctors, dentists or healthcare providers that you are taking pills/tablets for your cancer.
- 2) Keep the pills/tablets away from children and pets and in a childproof container.
- 3) Keep the pills/tablets in the original container, unless otherwise directed. It could be dangerous to mix with other pills.
- 4) Wash your hands before and after handling the pills/tablets.
- 5) Do not crush, chew, cut or disrupt your pills/tablets unless directed otherwise
- 6) Store your pills/tablets away from heat, sunlight, or moisture as it may degrade the pills/tablets, potentially making them less effective.
- 7) Have a system to make sure you take your pills/tablets correctly.
 - * *Give the patient some ideas, such as timer, clock or calendar.*
- 8) Make sure you have directions about what to do if you miss a dose
- 9) If you accidentally take too many pills or if someone else takes your pills/tablets, contact your Doctor or nurse immediately.
- 10) Ask your nurse or pharmacist what you should do with any pills/tablets you have not taken or are out-dated.
 - * *The patient may be asked to bring unused pills/tablets back to the next visit.*
- 11) Carry with you a list of medicines that you are taking, including your cancer pills/tablets.
- 12) Let us know if you have a problem with paying for or getting your pills.
- 13) Plan ahead for travel, refills and weekends.

Drug-Specific Education –

The following information relates to topics and references for the specific treatment that the patient is receiving.

Refer to drug specific information to educate the patient on his/her pills/tablets

References

- Product package insert or prescribing information
- <http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk/Treatments/Chemotherapy/Individualdrugs>
- Micromedix
- AHFS Drug Info.
- <http://www.cancersource.com/LibraryAndResources/DrugGuide/>
- <http://www.naturaldatabase.com>

Add website addresses, email links, internet sites

Whichever tool is used to educate the patient, include the following drug-specific information. You can complete the form provided below and give it to the patients using reference material you have on the specific pills/tablets.

Drug name (generic and trade)

What the drug looks like

Dose and schedule.

How many different pills?

How many times a day?

For how long?

Where to store the drug

* Be specific, for example, away from heat (not in the kitchen), humidity (not in the bathroom), sun (not on the window sill)

What are potential side effects and management of them?

* Include lab evaluations or any medical tests that will be used for drug monitoring.

Are there any precautions?

Are there any drug and food interactions.

When and whom to call with questions

* Give names and phone numbers here

EVALUATE

Have the patient and/or caregiver answer the following questions to ensure that they understand what information you have given them.

You have received a lot of information today. Let's review key points.

What is/are the name(s) of your cancer pill(s)/tablet(s)?

When will you take your cancer pill(s)/tablet(s)?

Does it matter if you take this pill/tablet with food or not?

Where do you plan to keep it?

When should you call the Doctor or Nurse?

Do you have any other questions?

Your next appointment is?

For problems, contact

DRUG-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Drug name (generic and trade)

What the drug looks like

Dose and schedule.

How many different pills? _____

How many times a day? _____

For how long? _____

Where the drug should be stored

* Be specific, for example, away from heat (not in the kitchen), humidity (not in the bathroom), sun (not on the window sill)

What are potential side effects and management of them?

* Include lab evaluations or any medical tests that will be used for drug monitoring.

Are there any precautions?

Are there any drug and food interactions.

When and whom to call with questions

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