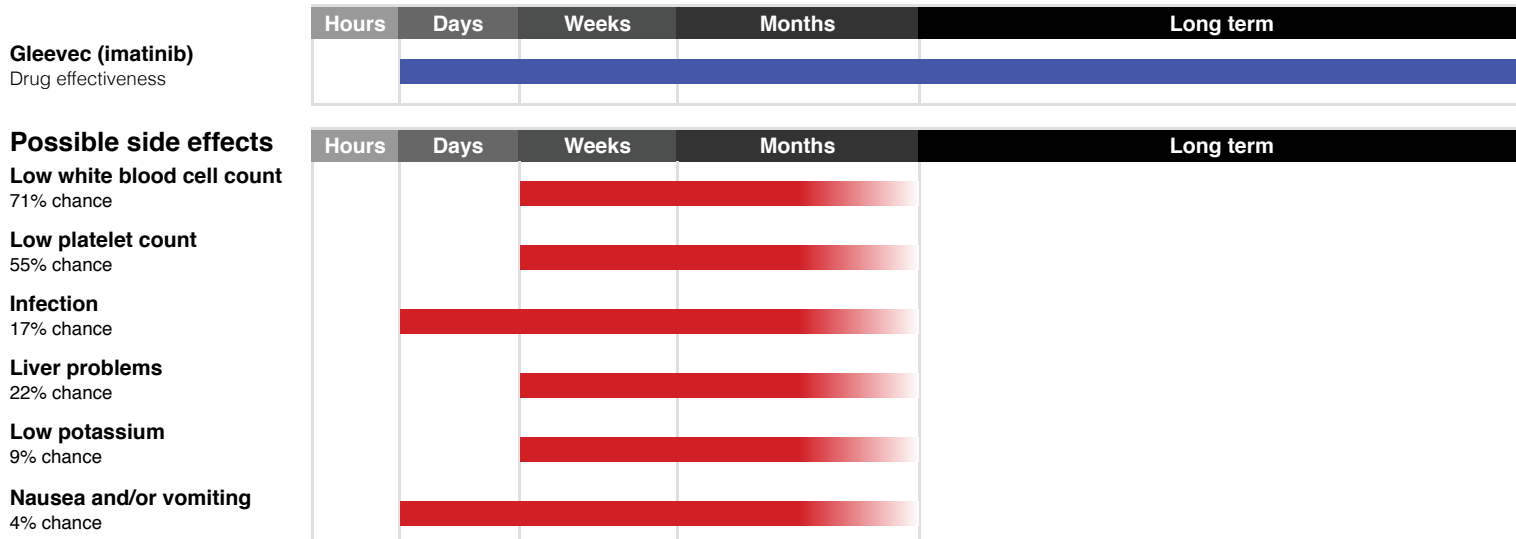


Gleevec (imatinib) basics

Treats leukemia and stomach tumors. Gleevec (imatinib) is good at treating leukemia and stomach tumors but it may cause serious side effects.

What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.



Tips from pharmacists

- Take Gleevec (imatinib) with food and a large glass of water. If you have difficulty swallowing pills, Gleevec (imatinib) can be dissolved in water or apple juice and then taken.
- A common side effect of Gleevec (imatinib) is water retention and swelling. Talk to your doctor if you have unexpected rapid weight gain.
- Gleevec (imatinib) can cause dizziness, blurred vision, and drowsiness. Avoid driving until you know how your body reacts to this medicine.
- Gleevec (imatinib) can interact with medicines such as warfarin, phenytoin, erythromycin, and others. Talk to your doctor about all the medications you are taking, including over the counter medicines and dietary supplements. Avoid grapefruit juice.

Risks and warnings

Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

Water retention and swelling

Gleevec (imatinib) can cause water retention and swelling. You'll need to weigh yourself regularly and tell your doctor about unexpected, rapid weight gain so it can be treated.

Low blood cell counts

Gleevec (imatinib) can cause low white blood cells and platelets, which can raise the risk of infection and bleeding. Talk to your doctor right away if you develop a fever, chills, easy bruising, or bleeding that won't stop.

Heart failure

In some rare cases, Gleevec (imatinib) can cause heart failure. If you're at higher risk for heart problems, your doctor might get extra tests on your heart.