

How should I store Tofacitinib?

The tablets should be stored at room temperature. Keep out of reach from children.

Does Tofacitinib affect pregnancy or breastfeeding?

There is insufficient data with Tofacitinib use in pregnant or breastfeeding women. Use effective contraception and avoid breastfeeding while you are taking Tofacitinib. You are advised to consult your doctor if you are planning to conceive.

Can I have immunisations while on Tofacitinib?

Being up to date with your vaccines reduces the risk of infection. Pneumococcal, influenza, hepatitis A and B, tetanus vaccinations are allowed. Avoid immunisations with live vaccines such as polio (oral), varicella (chicken pox), and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) while on Tofacitinib.

Are there alternatives to Tofacitinib?

Your doctor will advise you on the safest and most effective option. If you have any concerns, do raise them with your doctor.

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WHAT IS TOFACITINIB? (Ulcerative Colitis)



What is Tofacitinib?

Tofacitinib is used to treat inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis. It is also licensed in some countries to treat ulcerative colitis.

Tofacitinib is a small molecule drug called a Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor. JAKs are enzymes that are involved in activating the body's immune response, which causes the gut inflammation in Ulcerative Colitis. Tofacitinib blocks this process, and reduces inflammation.

How do I take Tofacitinib?

Tofacitinib is usually taken by mouth twice a day. It can be taken with or without food. Your doctor will advise the dosage based on your condition.

Avoid drinking grapefruit juice and eating grapefruit while you are on Tofacitinib.

How long does it take for Tofacitinib to start working for ulcerative colitis?

If Tofacitinib works for you, you may see improvement in 8 weeks. Some patients begin to feel better as soon as 3 days after starting Tofacitinib. Discuss with your doctor if you do not see improvement in 16 weeks.

Why are blood tests and health screening necessary when taking Tofacitinib?

Appropriate blood tests and health screening (e.g. hepatitis B and C, herpes zoster, skin examination) are important to minimise the risk of side effects associated with Tofacitinib.

It is not safe to continue Tofacitinib if you do not come for regular blood checks and health screening.

Should I avoid any medication while on Tofacitinib?

You should show your doctor or pharmacist all other medications you are taking or plan to take, including supplements and over-the-counter medications as they may interact with Tofacitinib and cause unexpected side effects. Your doctor will adjust your therapy if you are taking interacting medications e.g. fluconazole, clarithromycin or azathioprine.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with your regular dosing schedule. **Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.**

What are the possible risks associated with Tofacitinib?

Side effects	Warning signs	Things you need to do
Rash, lip swelling, wheezing		Stop the medication and inform your doctor
Increased risk of infections (e.g. shingles, tuberculosis, bacterial/viral infections)		See a doctor if symptoms of infection develop (e.g. fever, chills). Wash hands often and stay away from people with coughs/colds. Discuss vaccinations with your doctor.

Warm, red or painful skin or sores		Inform your doctor.
Nausea, diarrhoea; headache, nose/ throat irritation; muscle/ joint pain or weakness; fatigue; slow or abnormal heartbeat		Inform your doctor.
High cholesterol, high blood pressure		Come for regular blood tests and monitor your blood pressure. Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
Low blood count	Easy bruising, severe sore throat, tiredness, pallor	Come for regular blood tests as advised.
Liver injury	Yellow eyes, tea-coloured urine, constant abdominal pain	Inform your doctor if you have any history of liver disease. Come for regular liver function tests as advised.
Small increase in risk of blood clot formation	Shortness of breath; swelling, redness and pain in a leg/ arm; change in balance, drooping on one side of face	Seek medical care immediately
Tears in stomach or bowel wall	Severe swelling and pain in abdomen, bloody or coffee ground vomitus, black tarry stools	Seek medical care immediately
Small increase in risk of certain cancers (skin, lymphoma)	Change in colour or size of a mole. A skin lump or growth.	Inform your doctor if there are signs of cancer. Inform your doctor if you have any history of cancers. Apply sunscreen daily.

Please seek medical attention if you experience any of the above symptoms.