

# Atezolizumab

**Names** The generic drug name is atezolizumab (A'tez'o'li'zue'mab). Tecentriq® is a brand name. There may be other brand names for this medication.

**How is it Given?** Your medicine will be given by infusion into a vein (intravenous or IV), usually in your arm, wrist, hand, or chest.

**What Is This Drug Used For?** This medication is used to treat bladder cancer and locally advanced or metastatic triple-negative breast cancer. It is used in combination with other drug therapies to treat some types of non-small cell lung cancer and extensive-stage small cell lung cancer.

**How Does it Work?** Cancer is a group of diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control. Traditional chemotherapy drugs identify and attack cancer cells because they divide (reproduce) quickly. They work by interfering with the cancer cells ability to divide. If the cells can't divide, they die.

Atezolizumab is an immunotherapy drug. Specifically, it is a monoclonal antibody. It works with your immune system to fight cancer.

Antibodies are an important part of the body's normal immune system. Your body usually makes antibodies in response to a foreign invader such as bacteria, a virus, or cancer cells. But cancer cells can overproduce a protein (PD-L1) that shuts down the immune system's normal attack reaction.

Atezolizumab attaches to the PD-L1 protein like a key in a lock. Once it attaches, it blocks the ability of the cancer cell to 'hide' from the immune system. The "marked" cancer cell is destroyed and the tumor shrinks.

What Should I  
Tell My Doctor  
Before I Begin?

Tell your doctor if you:

- have ever had an allergic reaction to atezolizumab or other drug
- have an infection
- have, or have ever had, an organ transplant, liver problems, an autoimmune disease (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, sarcoidosis, etc.), lung or breathing problems, or a condition that affects your nervous system (Myasthenia Gravis, Guillain-Barre syndrome)
- are taking medication that suppresses your immune system such as the oral steroids prednisone or dexamethasone
- are pregnant or breastfeeding

**This drug may interact with other medications. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal or diet supplements that you are taking.**

What Are Some  
Possible Side  
Effects?

- Fatigue (common), anemia
- Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting
- Abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, colitis (inflamed colon),
- Skin problems such as itching, rash
- Urinary tract infection
- Fever, headache, shortness of breath, and cough
- Back or joint pain
- Sleep problems (trouble falling or staying asleep)
- Feeling cold
- Swelling of arms
- Hair loss
- Weight gain

How Can I  
Manage These  
Side Effects?

- Get plenty of rest and maintain good nutrition.
- If you have diarrhea or are vomiting, you are at risk for dehydration. To prevent dehydration, drink plenty of fluids, 2-3 quarts every 24 hours (unless your doctor has told you to restrict fluids).
- If you have nausea, eat small meals more frequently instead of 3 large meals. Avoid greasy, fried, and spicy foods
- Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent or lessen nausea and headache.
- To help prevent diarrhea, drink small sips of a liquid such as a sugar-free sports drink often throughout the day, eat mild foods (crackers).

How Can I  
Manage These  
Side Effects?  
(continued)

- Diarrhea: Call your doctor or nurse. It is important to manage diarrhea as soon as it begins. Drink fluids, such as water, diluted cranberry juice, broth, or decaffeinated tea or coffee. Eat small but frequent meals. Eat foods containing soluble fiber. Soluble fibers break down in water. Foods high in soluble fiber include beans, oat cereals, Brussel sprouts, oranges, and flaxseeds. Ask your doctor or nurse if you can be treated with over-the-counter medications.
- If you get a rash, keep the area clean and dry and check with your doctor before using any creams or ointments on the area.
- Drink at least 2-3 quarts of fluid every 24 hours, unless your doctor gives you other instructions.
- Check with your doctor before using any over-the-counter or herbal products for any symptom or side effect.
- Do not use any tobacco products.
- Wash your hands often.
- If you have any potentially serious side effect, contact your healthcare provider.

When Should I  
Call the  
Doctor?

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

- any signs of infection: temperature of 100.4 °F (38 °C) or above, chills, sore throat, or frequent or burning urination
- chest pain
- persistent or unusual headache, extreme weakness, dizziness, stiff neck, vision changes, or new and severe numbness
- Bloody or light-colored stool, yellow skin, eyes, or tongue; dark urine, unusual swelling in one arm or leg; bleeding, or severe pain
- Symptoms of an immune-mediated reaction (see What Else Should I Know About Atezolizumab on the next page)

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have:

- nausea, vomiting, or a persistent or unusual headache that does not get better with prescribed medication
- easy bruising or bleeding, extreme fatigue

**Call 911 immediately** if you experience any signs of allergic reaction: wheezing, chest tightness, itching, rash, dizziness, lightheadedness, palpitations, shortness of breath, or swelling of face, lips, tongue, or tongue

## What Else Should I Know About Atezolizumab?

- Immune-mediated reaction is a very serious, but uncommon, side effect that causes inflammation of an organ system. Most often, it occurs in the intestines, lung, liver, or endocrine glands (thyroid, pituitary, adrenal, etc.). This reaction is most common during treatment, but a few have occurred weeks or months after treatment ended. Your doctor will order lab tests and monitor you.

If you have any of the following, call your doctor immediately.

- Symptoms of intestinal problems: black or sticky stools or stools with blood or mucus; diarrhea or more bowel movements than usual; change in bowel habits; unexpected weight changes; or stomach pain or tenderness
- Symptoms of liver problems: yellowing of the skin or eyes; nausea or vomiting; feeling less hungry than usual; pain on the right side of your stomach area; dark urine; and easy bruising or bleeding
- Symptoms of lung problems: include shortness of breath, new or worse cough, and chest pain
- Symptoms of kidney problems: changes in the amount or color of your urine
- Symptoms of hormone gland problems (thyroid, pituitary, and adrenal glands especially): fast heart beat; weight loss; increase in sweating; weight gain; hair loss; feeling cold; constipation; deeper voice than usual; muscle aches; dizziness or fainting; headaches that will not go away; or unusual headache
- Problems in other organs. Symptoms may include: rash, changes in eyesight, severe muscle or joint pains, or severe muscle weakness
- Keep all appointments with your doctor and the lab.
- Do not start any medications unless you check with your oncologist first.
- Do not get any kind of immunization or vaccination, like a flu shot, unless you have your doctor's permission.
- Do not get pregnant or father a child while taking atezolizumab. Use effective contraception during treatment and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Atezolizumab can cause fatal harm to a fetus. Talk to your doctor about when you may safely get pregnant or father a child.
- If you have any other questions about atezolizumab, please talk to your doctor or pharmacist.