Keytruda

Generic Name: pembrolizumab

Pronunciation: key-TRUE-duh

Drug Class: Immunotherapy Medications

Company: Merck

Approval Status: Approved

Generic Version Available: No

Drug Indication

Keytruda is a PD-1 checkpoint inhibitor approved for inoperable or metastatic melanoma, adjuvant treatment of melanoma after surgery, non-small-cell lung cancer, bladder (urothelial) cancer, head and neck cancer, esophageal cancer, liver cancer, kidney cancer, stomach cancer, classic Hodgkin lymphoma, primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma, Merkel cell carcinoma, cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma and pre- and post-surgery treatment of triple-negative breast cancer. It is also approved for all metastatic solid tumors with high microsatellite instability or mismatch repair deficiency mutations (MSI-H/dMMR) or high tumor mutation burden.

General Info



Keytruda is a monoclonal antibody used in cancer immunotherapy. It is a checkpoint inhibitor that blocks the PD-1 receptor on T cells. PD-1 plays a role in regulating immune function. Some tumors can hijack PD-1 to turn off immune responses against them. Drugs that block the interaction between PD-1 and its binding partner, known as PD-L1, can release the brakes and restore T-cell activity.

Studies in the KEYNOTE clinical trials program showed that Keytruda slows progression of several types of cancer, and improves survival for people with certain cancers. It was first approved in 2014. It 2017, it was the first drug approved to treat cancer anywhere in the body with specific genetic mutations, known as high microsatellite instability or mismatch repair deficiency, that interfere with a cell's ability to repair DNA damage. In 2020, it was approved for dosing every six weeks in addition to every three weeks.

Dosage

Dosing Info:

Keytruda is administered by intravenous infusion. The usual adult dose is 200 mg every three weeks or 400 mg every six weeks until disease progression occurs. The pediatric dose is based on body weight.

Side Effects

Common side effects include fatigue, muscle and joint pain, abdominal pain, decreased appetite, itching, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, rash, fever, cough and shortness of breath. Checkpoint inhibitors can cause an overactive immune response that harms healthy organs and tissues. Serious immune-mediated side effects can affect almost any organ including the lungs, liver, kidneys, intestines, skin and hormone-producing endocrine glands.

For More Info: https://www.keytruda.com/

Co-Pay Program Info:
http://www.merckaccessprogram-keytruda.com/hcc/the-merck-copay-assistance-program/

Patient Assistance Program Info:
http://www.merckaccessprogram-keytruda.com/hcc/the-merck-copay-assistance-program/

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