

- Pirfenidone is currently the only approved therapy for slowing progression of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a rare, progressive, irreversible, and ultimately fatal chronic lung disease.
- While pirfenidone is generally well tolerated, a minority of patients discontinue therapy due to gastrointestinal (GI) and skin-related adverse events (AEs).
- Animal studies suggest that GI AEs arise from pirfenidone's effect on reducing gastric emptying and small intestinal transit, while skin-related AEs are likely associated with pirfenidone's ability to absorb ultraviolet (UV) light.
- Optimizing AE management is key to maintaining patients on an optimal treatment dose.
- Recommendations to help prevent and/or mitigate GI and skin-related AEs include taking pirfenidone during (or right after) a meal, avoiding sun exposure, wearing protective clothing, and applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen with high UVA and UVB protection.

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