

Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta™)

Pegfilgrastim is a medicine that helps the bone marrow make new white blood cells. This medicine helps reduce and prevent infections if your resistance to infection is lowered by chemotherapy or certain diseases. It works similar to filgrastim (Neupogen®), but it does not need to be given as often.

How Is It Given?

- by injection just under the skin (subcutaneous injection) once for each chemotherapy cycle, at least 24 hours after completing chemotherapy and at least 14 days before the next cycle

What Side Effects May Occur?

This is a partial list of the side effects you may have with this medicine. You may have some, all or none of those listed, or you may have other side effects not listed. Most side effects last only a short time.

Common:

- bone pain
- muscle and joint aches
- nausea (feel like throwing up)
- diarrhea (loose stools) or constipation
- redness, swelling, bruising, pain or a hard lump where the shot is given

Less common:

- chest pain
- swelling in your arms and legs
- headaches
- skin rash or itching
- fatigue or weakness
- allergy symptoms of skin rash or hives:
 - swelling in your face, lips or throat
 - tightness in your chest
 - breathing problems
 - fast or irregular heartbeat
- fever

Special Notes

- Pegfilgrastim should not be given in the period between 14 days before or 24 hours after receiving chemotherapy.
- You may have changes in your menstrual cycle. Discuss birth control measures with your doctor. You should not get pregnant or father a child while taking this medicine. Do not breastfeed while taking this medicine.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if you are having bone pain while receiving this medicine. Your doctor can prescribe medicine to help relieve the pain.

- If you are giving yourself a shot, you will learn how to do this.
 - Keep the medicine syringe in the refrigerator. Take the medicine out of the refrigerator about one hour before you need it. Let the medicine warm up to room temperature.
 - You may leave the medicine at room temperature for up to 48 hours before giving yourself the shot. Keep the medicine away from heat or direct light.
 - Do not shake the medicine syringe. If the medicine has bubbles in it or is foamy, let the syringe set a few minutes until the foam goes away.
 - When you give yourself a shot, choose a different place on your thighs or abdomen to give each shot. Do not use the same place each time.

When To Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if you have:

- signs of an allergy:
 - skin rash or hives
 - swelling in your face, lips or throat
 - tightness in your chest
 - breathing problems
 - fast or irregular heartbeat
- fever, chills or sore throat
- chest tightness or pain
- pain, burning, itching or swelling at the shot site(s)
- swelling in your hands, ankles or feet
- unusual bruising, bleeding or weakness
- shortness of breath.

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you want more complete medicine information or if you have questions.