



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Denosumab

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

### **Brand Names: US**

Prolia; Xgeva

### **Brand Names: Canada**

Prolia; Xgeva

### **What is this drug used for?**

#### **Xgeva®:**

- It is used when treating some cancers.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

#### **Prolia™:**

- This drug is not approved for use in children. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about

giving this drug to your child.

## **What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?**

- If your child has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.
- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If your child has low calcium levels.
- If your child is using another drug that has the same drug in it.

## **If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:**

- If your child is pregnant or may be pregnant.
- Talk with the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child's drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for your child to take this drug with all of his/her drugs and health

problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

## **What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug may raise the chance of a broken leg. Talk with the doctor.
- After this drug is stopped, the chance of a broken bone is raised. This includes bones in the spine. The chance of having more than 1 broken bone in the spine is raised if your child has ever had a broken bone in the spine. Be sure your child does not stop treatment with this drug without talking to your child's doctor.
- Your child may need to have a bone density test. Talk with the doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Give calcium and vitamin D as you were told by your child's doctor.
- Have your child get a dental exam before starting this drug.
- Take care of your child's teeth. See a dentist often.
- Very low blood calcium levels have happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. If you have questions, talk

with the doctor.

- High calcium levels have happened after this drug was stopped in people whose bones were still growing and people with giant cell bone tumor. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has signs of high calcium levels like weakness, confusion, feeling tired, headache, upset stomach or throwing up, constipation, or bone pain.
- If your child is of childbearing age, a pregnancy test will need to be done before starting this drug to make sure she is not pregnant.

### **If your child is or may be sexually active:**

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy.
- Have your child use birth control while taking this drug and for some time after the last dose. Ask the doctor how long your child must use birth control. If your child becomes pregnant, call the doctor right away.

### **What are some side effects that I need to call my child's doctor about right away?**

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red,

swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.

- Signs of low calcium levels like muscle cramps or spasms, numbness and tingling, or seizures.
- Signs of low phosphate levels like change in eyesight, feeling confused, mood changes, muscle pain or weakness, shortness of breath or other breathing problems, or trouble swallowing.
- Mouth sores.
- Swelling in the arms or legs.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Any new or strange groin, hip, or thigh pain.
- Very bad bone, joint, or muscle pain.
- Shortness of breath.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- This drug may cause jawbone problems. The risk may be higher the longer your child takes this drug. The risk may be higher if your child has cancer, dental problems, dentures that do not fit well, anemia, blood clotting problems, or an infection. The risk may also be higher if your child is having dental work, gets chemo or radiation, or takes other drugs that may cause jawbone problems (like some steroid drugs).

Talk with your child's doctor if any of these apply to your child, if your child will be having dental work, or if your child takes other drugs that may cause jawbone problems. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your child's doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has jaw swelling or pain.

### **What are some other side effects of this drug?**

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child's doctor or get medical help if your child has any side effects that bother your child or do not go away.

- Back pain.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or feeling less hungry.
- Joint pain.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Headache.
- Signs of a common cold.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

### **How is this drug best given?**

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin.

### **What do I do if my child misses a dose?**

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

### **How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

### **General drug facts**

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so.

Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

### **Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

### **Last Reviewed Date**



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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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