PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Abatacept

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Orencia; Orencia ClickJect

Brand Names: Canada

Orencia

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat some types of arthritis.
- It is used to prevent graft versus host disease (GVHD) in certain people who are getting a bone marrow transplant.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Adalimumab, certolizumab, etanercept, golimumab, or infliximab.
- If you are taking anakinra, rituximab, or tocilizumab.

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

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug may be used with other drugs to treat your health condition. If you are also taking other drugs, talk with your doctor about the risks and side effects that may happen.
- You may have more of a chance of getting an infection. Some infections have been severe or deadly. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- You will need a TB (tuberculosis) test before starting this drug.
- Hepatitis B testing may be done. A hepatitis B infection may get worse while taking this drug.
- Make sure you are up to date with all your vaccines before treatment with this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines while you take this drug and after you stop taking it. Vaccine use with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well. Talk with your doctor.
- Breathing problems have happened more often in people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) when taking this drug. This includes COPD that gets worse, cough, and trouble breathing. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may add to the chance of getting some types of cancer. Talk with the doctor.

- Have your skin checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.
- If you used this drug during pregnancy, tell your baby's doctor. You will need to discuss the safety and timing of certain vaccines with the doctor.

Vials:

- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), talk with your doctor about which glucose tests are best to use.

Preventing graft versus host disease (GVHD):

- If you have had a cytomegalovirus (CMV) or Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) infection, talk with your doctor. CMV and EBV infections have happened with this drug. They have also become active again in people who had these infections before. Your doctor may have you take other drugs to prevent these infections.

What are some side effects that I need to call my 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 doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

For all uses of this drug:

- 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. Rarely, some allergic reactions have been deadly.

- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of high or low blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Flu-like signs.
- Warm, red, or painful skin or sores on the body.
- A skin lump or growth.
- Change in color or size of a mole.
- Call your doctor right away if you have a swollen gland, night sweats, shortness of breath, or weight loss without trying.

Preventing graft versus host disease (GVHD):

- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.

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 doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness or headache.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Upset stomach.
- Stomach pain or diarrhea.
- Back pain.
- Nosebleed.

- Bruising, itching, pain, or redness where the shot was given.

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

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

Vials:

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.

Prefilled syringes and auto-injectors:

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh or the belly area.
- This drug may be given into the outer area of the upper arm if given by someone else.
- If you will be giving yourself the shot, your doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Wash your hands before and after you give the shot.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- This drug is colorless to a faint yellow. Do not use if the solution changes color.
- Before using this drug, take it out of the refrigerator and leave it at room temperature for 30 minutes.
- If you see a small air bubble in the device, do not get rid of it.

- Move the site where you give the shot with each shot.
- Do not give into skin within 2 inches (5 cm) of the belly button.
- Do not give into skin that is irritated, tender, bruised, red, scaly, hard, scarred, or has stretch marks.
- Do not rub the site where you give the shot.
- Throw syringe away after use. Do not use the same syringe more than one time.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

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

Vials:

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

Prefilled syringes and auto-injectors:

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Store in the original container to protect from light.

All products:

- 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.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- 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.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. 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 generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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