PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Aldesleukin

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

Proleukin

Brand Names: Canada

Proleukin

Warning

- This drug may cause a severe and sometimes deadly problem called capillary leak syndrome (CLS). CLS may lead to low blood pressure, abnormal heartbeat, chest pain, or heart attack. It may also lead to lung or breathing problems, bleeding or lower blood flow in the stomach or bowel, kidney problems, swelling, or feeling confused. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you get signs of capillary leak syndrome (CLS) like change in the amount of urine passed; unable to pass urine; blood in the urine; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; chest pain or pressure; a fast heartbeat; shortness of breath; a big weight gain; throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds; or if you have black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Nervous system problems have happened with this drug. Sometimes, these may cause permanent effects, lead to coma, or be life-threatening. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of getting a very bad infection. If you have an infection, it needs to be treated before you get this drug. Tell your doctor if you get signs of infection like a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, a wound that will not heal, or anal itching or pain.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat kidney cancer.
- It is used to treat a type of skin cancer (melanoma).

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 have had an abnormal heart stress test or an abnormal lung function test.
- If you have had any of these health problems with this drug in the past: Bleeding or blood flow problems in the stomach or bowel; hole in the stomach or bowel; chest pain; fast or abnormal heartbeat, heart attack, or other heart problems; lung or breathing problems; mental or mood problems; or seizures.
- If you have had an abnormal brain scan.
- If you have any of these health problems: Kidney disease or liver disease.
- If you have had an organ transplant.
- If you feel very sluggish or sleepy.
- If you have a breathing tube.
- If you are taking a steroid drug, drugs that may cause low blood pressure, or drugs that may cause kidney, liver, or nerve problems.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.

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?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- High blood sugar has happened with this drug. This includes diabetes that is new or worse.
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you have signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- If you have had or will be having an exam or test with contrast, talk with the doctor.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- Worsening of autoimmune diseases or health problems with inflammation can happen with this drug. Sometimes, this may be severe or deadly. If you have an autoimmune disease or a health problem with inflammation, talk with the doctor.
- A skin reaction called bullous pemphigoid has happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, people have had to go to the hospital. Call your doctor right away if you have blisters or if your skin starts to break down.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

- This drug may cause harm to an unborn baby or loss of an unborn baby. A pregnancy test will be done before you start this drug to show that you are NOT pregnant.
- If you may become pregnant, you must use birth control while taking this drug. If you get pregnant, call your doctor right away.

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:

- 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 thyroid problems like change in weight; feeling nervous, excitable, restless, or weak; hair thinning; depression; eye or neck swelling; not able to focus; trouble with heat or cold; menstrual changes; shakiness; or sweating.
- Signs of gallbladder problems like pain in the upper right belly area, right shoulder area, or between the shoulder blades; yellow skin or eyes; fever with chills; bloating; or very upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- 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.
- Signs of too much acid in the blood (acidosis) like confusion; fast breathing; fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; very bad stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; feeling very sleepy; shortness of breath; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Signs of electrolyte problems like mood changes; confusion; muscle pain,

cramps, or spasms; weakness; shakiness; change in balance; an abnormal heartbeat; seizures; loss of appetite; or severe upset stomach or throwing up.

- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Feeling confused.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).
- Trouble speaking.
- Trouble walking.
- Change in balance.
- Change in eyesight or loss of eyesight.
- Mental, mood, or behavior changes that are new or worse.
- Seizures.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Any skin change.
- Swelling.
- Shortness of breath.
- Feeling sluggish or very sleepy.
- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

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:

- Stomach pain.
- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Anxiety.
- Runny nose.
- Weight gain.
- Diarrhea, throwing up, upset stomach, and decreased appetite are common with this drug. If these happen, talk with your doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not get better, or are severe.

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.

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- Other drugs may be given before this drug to help avoid side effects.

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?

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

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.
- 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.
- 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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