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 child's doctor if your child gets signs of

capillary leak syndrome (CLS) like change in the amount of urine passed; not able 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 your child has 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 your child has an infection, it needs to be treated before getting this drug.
- Call your child's doctor right away if your child has any signs of infection like fever, chills, flu-like signs, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or a wound that will not heal.

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 the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has had an abnormal heart stress test or an abnormal lung function test.
- If your child has 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 your child has had an abnormal brain scan.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Kidney disease or liver disease.
- If your child has an infection.
- If your child has had an organ transplant.
- If your child feels very sluggish or sleepy.
- If your child has a breathing tube.
- If your child is taking a steroid drug, drugs that may cause low blood pressure, or drugs that may cause kidney, liver, or nerve problems.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug.

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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- High blood sugar has happened with this drug. This includes diabetes that is new or worse.
- Check your child's blood sugar as you have been told by the doctor.

- Your child may have more chance of getting infections. Have your child wash hands often. Avoid crowds and people with infections, colds, or flu.
- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush.
- If your child has had or will be having an exam or test with contrast, talk with the doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before your child gets any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of very bad 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 your child has an autoimmune disease or a health problem with inflammation, talk with the doctor.
- If your child is of childbearing age, a pregnancy test will need to be done before starting this drug to make sure your child is not pregnant.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby or loss of the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy.

- Talk to the doctor about having your child use birth control to prevent pregnancy while taking this drug. If your child gets 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 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 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 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 high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- 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 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.

- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- 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 skin reaction called bullous pemphigoid has happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, people have had to go to the hospital. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has blisters or if your child's skin starts to break down.
- A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson

syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if your child has signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in the 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 child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child 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 child's doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your child's doctor right away if any of these effects bother your child, 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 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 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 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 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 child's 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

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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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