PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Epoprostenol

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

Flolan [DSC]; Veletri

Brand Names: Canada

Caripul; Flolan

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure in the lungs.

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 heart failure (weak heart).
- If your child has ever gotten fluid in the lungs with use of

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 avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles.
- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush.

- Have your child's blood pressure checked as you have been told.
- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden without calling the doctor. Signs of high pressure in the lungs like shortness of breath, dizziness, or weakness may get worse. Talk with the doctor.
- Always have a backup system close by in case you need to use it.

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

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

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 bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- 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.
- Shortness of breath.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Dark urine.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat.
- Pale skin.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble controlling body movements.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- A burning or tingling feeling that is not normal.

- Swelling of belly.
- Redness or swelling where the injection is given.
- Skin sores.

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:

- Anxiety.
- Irritation where the shot is given.
- Diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Dizziness or headache.
- Flushing.
- Back, bone, joint, or muscle pain.
- Jaw pain.
- Flu-like signs. These include headache, weakness, fever, shakes, aches, pains, and sweating.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.

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 into the vein nonstop.
- It is likely that treatment will be needed for a long time, maybe years. You will need to closely follow how to use this drug and how to care for the catheter and infusion pump. Talk with the doctor if you have questions.
- Your child's doctor may teach you how to give this drug.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Be sure you know what types of materials and tubing to use with this drug. If you are not sure, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- It is important that the infusion does not stop unless your child's doctor tells you otherwise. If your child misses a dose or if the infusion stops, get medical help right away.

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

- Store as you have been told by the doctor.
- After opening or mixing this drug with fluids, be sure you know how to store this drug and how long the drug is good for.
- 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 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.

- 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.

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Last Reviewed Date

2023-10-23

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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.

Epoprostenol - Last updated on December 12, 2022

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