

## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Omalizumab

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**

Xolair

### **Brand Names: Canada**

Xolair

## **Warning**

- Allergic reactions have happened after this drug was given. Sometimes, this has been life-threatening. Allergic reactions have happened as early as after the first dose. They have also happened after a year of treatment. Treatment will be started in a health care setting where your child will be watched closely after getting it. Tell the doctor right away about any anxiety, chest or throat tightness, cough, dizziness, fast or weak heartbeat, feeling warm, flushing, hives, hoarse voice, itching, passing out, rash, shortness of breath, swelling of the throat or tongue, trouble breathing or swallowing, wheezing, or any other bad effects.

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

- It is used to treat hives.
- It is used to treat asthma.
- It is used to lower the chance of severe allergic reaction that may happen from accidentally eating a food to which a person is allergic.
- If your child has been given this drug for some other

reason, talk with the doctor about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

### **For asthma:**

- Do not give this drug to treat an asthma attack. Use a rescue inhaler. Talk with the doctor.

### **For allergic reasons:**

- Do not use this drug to treat an allergic reaction. Talk with the doctor about what drug to use to treat an allergic reaction.

### **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.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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.
- If your child has a latex allergy, talk with the doctor. Some products have latex.
- Cases of cancer have happened in some people taking this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Some people at high risk for parasite infections have gotten a parasite infection after taking this drug. The doctor may test your child's stool to see if your child has a parasite infection. Talk with the doctor.
- It may take a few months to see the full effect.
- If your child is switching to this drug from a steroid, do not stop giving the steroid to your child all of a sudden. The dose of the steroid may need to be slowly lowered to avoid side effects. Talk with the doctor.
- Some people using this drug get fever; joint pain, stiffness, or swelling; muscle pain; swollen glands; or rash. This has happened within 1 to 5 days after

getting this drug. Call the doctor right away if your child has any of these signs.

- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- Some forms of this drug may not be for use in all ages of children. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

**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.

**For allergic reasons:**

- This drug is not a cure for allergies. Continue to have your child avoid foods that cause an allergic reaction. If your child is taking other drugs for their allergy, do not have your child stop taking them unless the doctor tells you otherwise.

## **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:

- Severe side effects have happened during and within 24 hours after the infusion. Most of the time these happened after the first dose, but they were also seen after later doses. Some of these effects have been life-threatening or deadly. Tell your doctor right away if you have a rash; hives; itching; fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat; back or muscle pain; chest pain or pressure; fever or chills; flushing; shortness of breath; stomach pain or upset; severe dizziness; passing out; feeling very tired or weak; or severe headache.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Bone pain.
- Trouble breathing that is new or worse.
- Some people taking this drug have had chest pain, heart attacks, transient ischemic attacks (TIAs), or

blood clots. It is not known if this drug caused these problems. Call the doctor if your child has chest, jaw, or arm pain or pressure; passing out; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or coughing up blood. Call the doctor if your child has a change in strength on 1 side that is greater than the other, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, or blurred eyesight.

### **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:

- Headache.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Irritation where the shot is given.
- Bruising, itching, pain, or redness where the shot was given.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Pain in arms or legs.

- Ear pain.
- Stomach pain.
- Nosebleed.

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.

### **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 your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Before using this drug, take it out of the refrigerator.



Allow it to reach room temperature. Some products will take 15 to 30 minutes. Some products will take 30 to 45 minutes. Be sure you know how long to let your product sit out. Do not heat this drug.

- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use this drug if it has been dropped or if it is broken.
- This drug is colorless to slightly yellow or slightly brown. Do not use if the solution changes color.
- Do not give into a mole, scar, or skin that is irritated, tender, bruised, red, hard, or broken.
- Do not inject through clothes.
- Inject at least 1 inch away from where the last dose was given. If your child's dose has more than 1 injection, give the injections into 2 different places at least 1 inch apart.
- Do not give into skin within 2 inches (5 cm) of the belly button.
- If you see a small air bubble in the device, do not get rid of it.
- Do not rub the site where you give the shot.
- Each auto-injector and prefilled syringe is for one use

only.

- 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.

## **Vials:**

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh, belly area, or upper arm.

## **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?**

### **Prefilled syringes and auto-injectors:**

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Do not use if it has been frozen.
- Store in the original container to protect from light.
- This drug can be taken out of the refrigerator and put back in if needed. The total amount of time out of the refrigerator must not be more than 2 days.
- Protect from heat. Do not use if the syringe has been at temperatures above 77°F (25°C).

## **Vials:**

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

## **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 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 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,

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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](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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