



## 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 up to 4 days after this drug was given. Sometimes, these allergic reactions have been life-threatening. This has happened as early as after the first dose. It has also happened after a year of care. Your child will be watched closely after getting this drug. 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.
- Do not give this drug to treat an asthma attack. Use a rescue inhaler. Talk with the doctor.

## 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 for your child to take this drug with all of his/her 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.

### **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.
- 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.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Nose and 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.

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin.

## **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 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

## **Last Reviewed Date**

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, 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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