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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Sargramostim

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

Leukine

## Brand Names: Canada

Leukine

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to lower the chance of getting an infection in people with bone marrow problems caused by chemo.
- It is used to raise the number of white blood cells in certain patients.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## What do I need to tell the doctor **BEFORE** my child takes this drug?

- If your child has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.
- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

## **If your child is breast-feeding a baby:**

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug and for 2 weeks after the last dose.

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?**

### **All products:**

- 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.
- Do not give this drug to your child at the same time or within 24 hours before or after he/she gets chemo or radiation treatment. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause a very bad and sometimes deadly problem called capillary leak syndrome (CLS). CLS may lead to low blood pressure and harm to the body. It may also lead to a heartbeat that is not normal, chest pain or pressure, heart attack, lung or breathing problems, bleeding or lower blood flow in the stomach or bowel, kidney problems, swelling, or feeling confused. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug can cause infusion reactions. Low blood pressure, a fast heartbeat, flushing, passing out, and breathing problems have happened with the first dose of a cycle. Most of the time, these signs have gone away with treatment. They do not usually come back with other doses in the same cycle. Tell your child's doctor if your child has any bad effects during or soon after an infusion.

### **If your child is pregnant:**

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If your child is pregnant or gets pregnant while taking this drug,

call the doctor right away.

### **Solution for injection:**

- This drug has benzyl alcohol in it. Benzyl alcohol may cause very bad and sometimes deadly side effects in newborns or infants. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not give this drug to a newborn. It has benzyl alcohol.

### **Powder for injection:**

- Some fluids used to mix this drug have benzyl alcohol. Do not give a product that has benzyl alcohol in it to a newborn or infant. It may cause very bad and sometimes deadly side effects. Talk with the doctor to see which fluids have benzyl alcohol.

## **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 low magnesium levels like mood changes, muscle pain or weakness, muscle cramps or spasms, seizures, shakiness, not hungry, very bad upset stomach or throwing up, or a heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, more thirst, more hungry, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Chest pain or pressure or a fast heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Dizziness or passing out.

- Very bad headache.
- Flushing.
- Fever or chills.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Change in eyesight.
- Skin irritation.
- Not able to pass urine or change in how much urine is passed.

## **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.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Belly pain.
- Bone pain.
- Joint pain.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Diarrhea.
- Weight loss.
- Throat irritation.
- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.

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.

### All products:

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.
- It may be given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss giving your child doses.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Follow how to give this drug as you have been told by your child's doctor or read the package insert.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Do not shake the solution.
- Wash your hands before and after you give the shot.
- Do not give into skin that is irritated, bruised, red, infected, or scarred.
- Move the site where you give the shot with each shot.
- 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.

### Powder for injection:

- This drug needs to be mixed before use. Follow how to mix as you were told by the doctor.

## 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?

## All products:

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Store in original container.
- 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.

## Solution for injection:

- After first use, store in a refrigerator. Throw away any part not used after 20 days.

## Powder for injection:

- After mixing, be sure you know how long the product is good for and how to store it. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

## 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 a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- 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 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.

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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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