MSK Kids

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

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 is used in patients who have been exposed to certain doses of radiation.
- 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 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 is allergic to yeast, talk with the doctor.

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 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.
- Do not give this drug to your child at the same time or within 24 hours before or after chemo or radiation treatment. If you have questions, talk with your child's doctor.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- 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.
- 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.

- Some fluids used to mix this drug have benzyl alcohol. If possible, avoid products with benzyl alcohol in newborns or infants. Serious side effects can happen in these children with some doses of benzyl alcohol, including if given with other drugs that have benzyl alcohol. Talk with the doctor to see which fluids have benzyl alcohol.

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.

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, decreased appetite, severe upset stomach or throwing up, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- 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 high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- 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.

- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- Sweating a lot.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Flushing.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Bleeding in the eye.
- 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.
- Diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Bone or joint pain.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Weight loss.
- Throat irritation.

- Mouth irritation or mouth sores.
- Hair loss.
- Headache.

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.
- It may be given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child’s doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- This drug needs to be mixed before use. Follow how to mix as you were told by the doctor.
- 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.
- 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, hard, 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.

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?

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Store in the outer carton to protect from light.
- After first use, throw away any of this drug left in the vial after 20 days. Write down the date of first use so you remember.
- 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.
- 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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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, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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