

Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta) On-body Injector

What is Pegfilgrastim and how does it work?

Pegfilgrastim, also called Neulasta, is a medicine used to help your body make more white blood cells. White blood cells (WBCs) help your body fight infection. With chemotherapy, your WBC count can drop below normal. This is known as **neutropenia**. A low WBC count puts you at a higher risk for infection. You may be given Pegfilgrastim after your chemotherapy treatment to help increase your WBC count, lower your risk for infection, and help your WBCs recover in time for your next chemotherapy treatment.

What is the “on-body injector”?

The on-body injector is a small, lightweight, waterproof, battery-powered device that is put on the skin of your upper arm or belly. During your chemotherapy treatment, your nurse will put the device on you to wear home. You will feel a small “poke” as the short needle enters your skin. The needle then automatically retracts back inside the device, leaving behind a small plastic tube in your skin. The on-body injector needle only goes through your skin and does not enter your vein. About 27 hours after the device is put on, you will hear a “beep” and the on-body injector will slowly infuse the medicine into your body through your skin. There should be no bleeding as the on-body injector infuses the medicine. This infusion takes about 45 minutes. **You can remove the on-body injector after all the medicine has been given and the light on the device is a solid green.**

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

How will my doctor decide if I need Pegfilgrastim?

To determine if you need this medicine and the amount, your doctor will review the following:

- Your age
- Your weight
- The type of cancer you have
- The type of chemotherapy treatment
- The type of cancer treatments you have had in the past (chemotherapy or radiation)
- Your most recent WBC count test results
- How well your liver and kidneys work
- Other health problems you may have

What are the common side effects of this medicine?

- Bone pain is a common side effect with this medicine. The pain tends to be worse in the first 2 to 3 days after the injection but may last for 7 or more days. The bone pain may be worse with the first injection and may decrease with future injections. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about what you can take to help with this pain.
- Joint and muscle pain
- Headache
- Mild swelling in your arms or legs

When to call my doctor?

Call your doctor if any of the following happen:

- The on-body injector falls off your skin (**keep it, and bring it with you to your next clinic visit**)
- A flashing red light shows up on the on-body injector
- The pad that sticks to your skin feels wet and you think the device is leaking

Call your doctor right away and get medical care if you have:

- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Swelling of your face, lips or throat
- Hives or skin rash
- Severe pain, blisters, redness or swelling at the injection site
- Sudden pain on the left side of your belly
- Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher

Other important information you should know about the on-body injector:

- The first time that you get Pegfilgrastim using the on-body injector, a caregiver should be with you while the medicine is being infused.
- A **flashing** green light means the on-body injector is working properly.
- The on-body injector will beep before the medicine begins infusing, and again when it is done. The on-body injector should read “empty” when all the medicine has been given. A solid green light means the medicine infusion is done. Make sure the fill line is on “empty” before you remove the on-body injector.
- **Keep the on-body injector at least 4 inches away from cell phones, cordless phones, microwaves, appliances, or other electrical devices. Do not have x-rays or scans when you are wearing the on-body injector.**
- If you need to shower or bathe, you may do so **up until 3 hours before your injection is scheduled to start**. Keep the injector dry for at least 3 hours before your infusion is scheduled to start.
- **Do not use hot tubs or saunas or be in direct sunlight for a long period of time when you are wearing the on-body injector.**
- **Do not** get body lotions, creams, oils or cleaning agents near the on-body injector. These products can cause the device to fall off your skin.
- **Do not** bump, apply direct pressure to, or sleep on the device.
- The on-body injector is for one-time use only. Once you take it off, the device should be thrown away.

- Throw away the on-body injector in a metal container or a hard plastic container that can be sealed. It may be helpful to use an empty detergent bottle or a special sharps container. Once the container is full, close the lid and tape it shut before you put the container in the trash. **Keep this container away from children and pets at all times.**

My healthcare provider's phone number is _____

My Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta) on-body injector was applied:

Day (Date): _____

Time (AM/PM): _____

My Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta) dose delivery will start around:

Day (Date): _____

Time (AM/PM): _____

- **Helpful Tip:** Setting an alarm or timer can help remind you when your dose will be delivered.

If you would like more information about Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta), visit the manufacturer's website [Neulasta - On-body Injector](#), or scan the QR code below:

