

Patient Information Regarding Use of Infliximab

You have been prescribed infliximab (**Remicade**). This medication is used to help induce remission (controlling the symptoms of your disease), when there is a continuing need for the use of Prednisone (which has many more side effects than infliximab) and when the development of fistula complicate your disease. This medication typically acts rapidly and you may see results after the first injection.

This medication can cause side effects that are temporary and it is important for you to know about these so, you can report them to your treating physician.

The side effects may include:

- Human anti-chimeric antibodies (HACA) develop in 13% of patients and increase the risk of acute infusion reactions. These reactions occur during the infusion of Remicade and may produce symptoms of chest tightness, shortness of breath, skin rash and low blood pressure. The risk of these reactions are less in patients taking glucocorticoids (Prednisone) or methotrexate, azathioprine, or 6-mercaptopurine.
- Delayed hypersensitivity reactions are rare but, generally occur 3 to 12 days after the infusion. These reactions produce symptoms of severe joint pain, muscle pain, swelling of the face, hives or skin rash. The major risk factor for this type of reaction is a long delay (six months or more) between infusions. These reactions are also less common in patients taking glucocorticoids (Prednisone) or methotrexate, azathioprine, or 6-mercaptopurine.
- Upper respiratory tract infections are more common in patients on Remicade and it is important to report symptoms of cough, sputum production (brown or yellow coughed-up phlegm), fever or chills to your physician immediately. All infections must be treated before continuing on treatment.
- Abscesses, that can occur with inflammatory bowel disease, must be treated with antibiotics and surgically drained before Remicade can be started or continued.
- Reactivation of old tuberculosis can occur and can be very serious. You should inform your physician if you have had tuberculosis in the past and you will be ordered a chest X-ray before treatment.
- In the initial studies on Remicade, a small number of patients (4 out of 500) developed lymphoma (cancer of the lymph nodes). It is not certain whether this was caused by the Remicade, other medications those patients were taking or would have developed in those patients despite their treatments.
- Remicade should not be used during pregnancy because the teratogenic (causing birth defects) effects are not known.

Remicade is given as an infusion in the Outpatient Infusion Center and takes several hours. The first infusion is followed by another at 2 weeks, 6 weeks and then every 8 weeks.