

## PHARMACY

Drug Information

### Pegfilgrastim (Neulasta®) Injection



#### What is Pegfilgrastim?

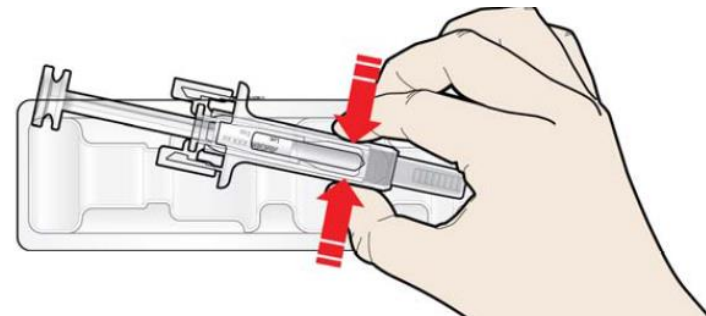
- Pegfilgrastim helps to stimulate the body to produce white blood cells to fight off infections.
- Pegfilgrastim is usually used in people whose ability to produce white blood cells is reduced. E.g. after administration of certain chemotherapy agents.

#### How is Pegfilgrastim Administered / Taken?

- Pegfilgrastim is usually given as a single injection under the skin (subcutaneous) of the abdomen, upper arms or thighs, at least 24 hours after your chemotherapy.

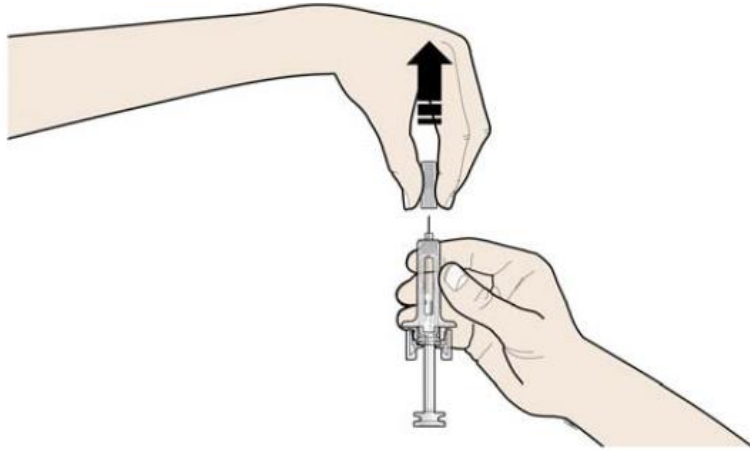
#### Instructions to inject Pegfilgrastim:

1. Remove the prefilled syringe carton from the refrigerator 30 minutes before the injection and allow it to warm to room temperature.
2. Remove the syringe from carton and open the tray by peeling away the cover. Grab the blue safety guard to remove the prefilled syringe from the tray.

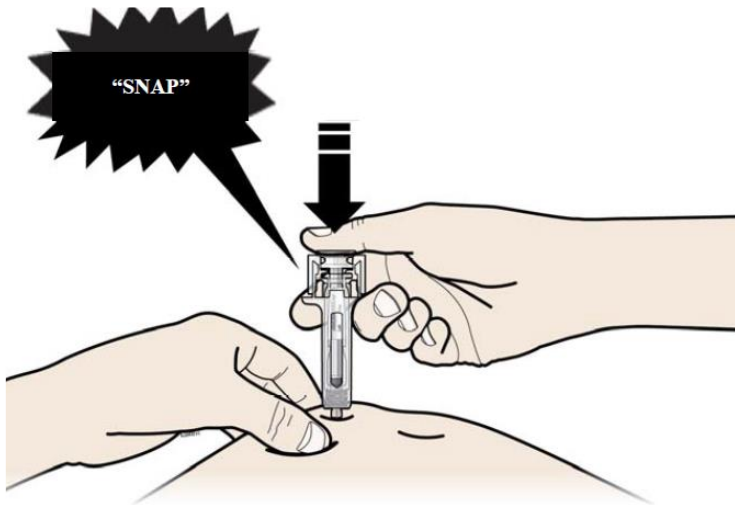


3. Clean the site of injection with alcohol swab and let it dry.

4. Hold the prefilled syringe by the syringe barrel. Carefully remove the grey needle cap from the syringe.



5. Pinch a large area of skin between your thumb and forefinger, to create a firm injection site.
6. Insert the needle directly into the skin at an angle of 45 to 90 degrees. Press the plunger down slowly until you hear a “snap” and the plunger is fully depressed.



7. Release your thumb, then lift the syringe off the skin.
8. Apply pressure on the injection site for several minutes. Do not rub.
9. Discard the used syringe in a sharps container.

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, take only the usual dose. Do not double the dosage.

#### Can Pegfilgrastim be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including supplements, traditional or herbal remedies.

#### What are the Important Side Effects of Pegfilgrastim?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Muscle aches and joint pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild pain can be relieved by taking Paracetamol (Panadol ®). Inform your doctor if pain is not controlled by Paracetamol (Panadol ®). Just a reminder to avoid Paracetamol (Panadol ®) when you are having fever.</li> <li>• Taking regular warm baths may also help.</li> </ul>
Swelling, difficulty breathing, fast heartbeat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform your doctor immediately if you experience such symptoms.</li> </ul>
Spleen rupture (spleen may become enlarged and rupture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience pain in the left upper stomach area.</li> </ul>
Kidney injury (Glomerulonephritis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience swelling of your face and ankles, blood in your urine or dark coloured urine and/or urinate less than usual.</li> </ul>
Side Effect	Management

Inflammation of the aorta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please proceed to the A &amp; E department immediately if you experience fever, abdominal pain, feeling tired and back pain.</li> </ul>
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If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

### Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- Inform your doctor if you plan to be pregnant or are pregnant while receiving Pegfilgrastim. You should not breast-feed during treatment.

### What Else can I do to Help My Condition?

- Exercise

Light exercise is recommended as it helps to improve mobility, balance and even emotional well-being. Avoid strenuous exercise, and rest when you are feeling tired.

- Stay positive

Understand your condition and take an active role in managing it. Do not be afraid to talk about it with your doctor/ pharmacist/ family members. Repressed feelings can be harmful to your immediate well-being and long-term health.

- Adequate hydration

Maintain adequate hydration with 2 to 3 litres (8 to 12 cups) of fluids per day unless informed by your doctor to restrict fluids. This will decrease your chances of getting constipation and also prevent dehydration.

- Medical and dental treatment

If you need to go into hospital for any reason other than cancer, always inform the doctors and nurses that you are having chemotherapy. Talk to your cancer doctor if you think you need dental treatment. Always inform your dentist that you are having chemotherapy.

### How do I Store Pegfilgrastim?

- Store your medication in a refrigerator between 2 – 8°C. Do not freeze. The injection is for single use only. Do not re-use the prefilled syringes. Alternatively, it can be kept at room temperature (below 30°C), away from sunlight for no longer than 3 days.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

You can also find useful information with regards to your medication on this website:

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support>

