

## PHARMACY

### Drug Information

# Secukinumab



### What is Secukinumab?

- Secukinumab is a monoclonal antibody which belongs to a class of medicine called biologics. Secukinumab works by binding to an inflammatory protein called interleukin 17A (IL-17A), hence reducing pain and inflammation from arthritis and rash from psoriasis. Secukinumab is used in the treatment of psoriatic arthritis, moderate to severe plaque psoriasis as well as ankylosing spondylitis.

### How is Secukinumab Administered?

- Secukinumab is available as a prefilled injection pen to be administered under the skin (subcutaneous) in the front of thighs, lower abdomen (at least 2 inches away from belly button) or upper outer arms. Do not inject on scars, stretch marks or areas where the skin is painful, bruised, red, scaly or hard. Before administering the medicine on your own, you or your carer should receive training from your rheumatology nurse clinician or pharmacist. Remember to rotate the injection site each time.
- Dosage regime of Secukinumab will depend on the disease condition treated.
- Secukinumab does not work immediately and it may take weeks to months before you notice any benefit. Thus, it is important that you administer your medication regularly or you may not benefit at all.
- If you miss a dose, inject the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, inject only the usual dose. Do not double the dosage.

### Can Secukinumab be Taken With Other Medications?

- Secukinumab can be taken with other medications such as corticosteroids, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and other disease modifying agents.
- Please inform your doctor, pharmacist or rheumatology nurse clinician if you are taking other medications including over-the-counter medicines, supplements or traditional/herbal remedies as they may interact with Secukinumab.
- Discuss with your doctor before receiving any vaccines. Pneumococcal and influenza (flu) vaccinations are safe and may be given if required. Avoid live vaccines such as MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), OPV (oral polio vaccine), yellow fever or BCG (tuberculosis).

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

- Due to the way Secukinumab works, some side effects may be present only after years of taking this medication. Always discuss with your doctor if you experience any side effects.

Side Effect	Management
Common side effects: Stuffy/runny nose, sore throat, diarrhoea, cold sores, injection site reactions e.g. itch, swelling or bruising	These are usually mild and tend to resolve on its own.  Inform your doctor if the symptoms are persistent.
Infection  (Warning signs: fever more than 38°C, chills, lethargy)	Seek medical attention immediately.  The doctor whom you consult should be informed that you are on Secukinumab as the medication may need to be stopped while you are having an infection.
Inflammatory bowel disease (rare)  (e.g. severe diarrhoea, persistent abdominal pain or blood in stool)	Consult your doctor immediately.  Inform your doctor if you have history of inflammatory bowel disease.

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?

- Secukinumab may reduce your body's ability to fight against infection, hence you should avoid crowded places and direct contact with any sick person. Avoid consumption of raw or undercooked food. See a doctor immediately if you develop a fever or feel unwell. The doctor whom you consult should be informed that you are on Secukinumab.
- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while on Secukinumab. The effect of Secukinumab on pregnancy is currently unknown, and it is also not known whether the medication is excreted into breast milk.

### How do I Store Secukinumab?

- Store your medication in a refrigerator between 2 – 8°C. Do not freeze or shake the injection.
- Secukinumab solution should be clear, and its colour may vary from colourless to light yellow. Do not use if the solution contains easily visible particles, is cloudy or is distinctly brown.

### How do I Dispose the Medication?

- After injecting Secukinumab, the used pen should be placed in a puncture-resistant container such as used metal tin or sharp bin. You may bring the used metal tin or sharp bin to the pharmacy or clinic for proper disposal.

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

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

