

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center

Medication Information Sheet for Humira

Brand Names: Humira

Generic Name: Adalimumab

Drug Class: Tumor necrosis factor (alpha) blocker

What does this medication do?

Used for the treatment of moderately to severely active Crohn's disease by partially inhibiting (suppressing) the activity of the immune system. This medication works by blocking a substance called tumor necrosis factor, which is made by certain white blood cells in your body. Humira may decrease the inflammation caused by too much tumor necrosis factor.

Possible Side Effects:

Humira is injected subcutaneously (just below the skin) and has been associated with hypersensitivity reactions (allergic reaction), and/or an autoimmunity reaction (lupus-like syndrome). You may be more prone to developing infections while on this medication. If you develop lupus-like syndrome or have a severe hypersensitivity reaction, you will need to discontinue using Humira

*A **hypersensitivity reaction** may occur at various times in relation to when the treatment begins and can occur soon after the injection, or even 3-12 days after the injection. Hypersensitivity reactions occur because part of the Humira drug is made from monoclonal antibodies and your body may recognize this as a foreign substance. You may also already be on Imuran, 6-MP or methotrexate as part of your treatment and these drugs help prevent hypersensitivity reactions.*

*A **lupus-like syndrome** may also occur and have symptoms such as: chest discomfort or pain that does not go away, shortness of breath, joint pain, and/or a rash on the cheeks or arms that gets worse in the sun.*

Please let your doctor know if you have:

- Ever had an infusion of Remicade or are using Enbrel
- An active infection, fevers or night sweats or a dry cough which does not go away
- Exposure to or previous infection with tuberculosis (TB) or a positive PPD (TB test)
- Multiple sclerosis, Guillain-Barre syndrome, any numbness or tingling or seizures

Please call your doctor to discuss any of these side effects:

- Headache
- Rash
- Injection site reaction
- Injection site pain

Call you doctor *immediately* if you have any of these side effects:

- Fever, chills, sore throat or other signs of infection
- Allergic reaction (itching or hives, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, tightness in your chest, trouble breathing, difficulty swallowing)
- Injection site reactions (redness, itching, swelling, bruising)
- Muscle aches
- Joint aches

Warnings:

- You may get infections more easily while taking this medicine. Stay away from people with colds, flu, or other infections.
- Talk to your doctor before getting immunized with live virus vaccines (flu shot, measles)

Dosage and Administration:

The Humira dosage comes as 40mg/0.8mL in pre-filled syringes. You will inject this medication subcutaneously (SQ) once every other week after an initial teaching session. You will inject into your abdomen or your thighs, being sure to rotate the injection sites in order to prevent severe injection site reactions.

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- Please call before injecting Humira if you are ill and/or running a fever
 - You will be tested for TB prior to receiving Humira using a Mantoux test (PPD). You may also be required to have a chest X-ray. If you have TB, you will need to be treated before starting Humira.