

## FOR THE PATIENT: **Filgrastim**

Other names: G-CSF, granulocyte colony stimulating factor,  
NEUPOGEN®

- **Filgrastim** (fill-GRASS-tim) is a drug that helps your bone marrow make new white blood cells. White blood cells protect your body by fighting bacteria (germs) that cause infection. Filgrastim is a clear liquid that is injected under your skin or into a vein.
- **If you are giving your own injection at home**, use filgrastim exactly as directed by your doctor. Make sure you understand the package directions and feel comfortable with the injections.
  - **Avoid shaking** the vials vigorously because this may damage the filgrastim.
  - **Use a different site for each injection.** You will be taught which sites on your body can be used. Check with your nurse or doctor to find out which sites on your body can be used for injections.
  - **Use each syringe once only.** Place used syringes in a rigid plastic container with a lid. Keep syringes out of reach of children.
  - Discard the container as instructed by your cancer treatment centre.
- For injections once a day: if you **miss a dose** of filgrastim, inject it as soon as you can if it is within 16 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 16 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- For injections twice a day: if you **miss a dose** of filgrastim, inject it as soon as you can if it is within 6 hours of the missed dose. If it is over 6 hours since your missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your usual dosing times.
- **Store** filgrastim in the refrigerator out of the reach of children. Do not freeze. If filgrastim is left at room temperature for more than 24 hours, throw it away. Do not leave the vials in direct sunlight.
- Other drugs may **interact** with filgrastim. Tell your doctor if you are taking any other drugs as your dose may need to be changed. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you start taking any new drugs.
- The **drinking of alcohol** (in small amounts) will not affect the safety or usefulness of filgrastim.
- The effect of filgrastim on sperm or the baby if used during pregnancy is not known. It is best to **use birth control** while being treated with filgrastim. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. **Do not breast feed** during treatment.
- **Tell** doctors or dentists that you are being treated with filgrastim before you receive any treatment from them.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
	<p>When your white blood cells are low, <b>you are at greater risk of having an infection.</b> To help prevent infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.</li> <li>·Take care of your skin and mouth.</li> <li>·Avoid crowds and people who are sick.</li> <li>·Call your doctor <b><i>immediately</i></b> at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C), chills, cough, sore throat or burning when you pass urine.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bone pain</b> may occur when the white blood cells start to come back in your bone marrow. It often occurs in the lower back or hips. The pain is usually mild and often lasts for only a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Take acetaminophen (eg, TYLENOL®) for mild to moderate pain.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pain or tenderness</b> may occur where the needle was placed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair loss is rare</b> with filgrastim. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with filgrastim. Colour and texture may change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Use a gentle baby shampoo and soft brush.</li> <li>·Avoid hair spray, bleaches, dyes and perms.</li> </ul>

**SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:**

- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 100°F or 38°C); chills; cough; sore throat; pain or burning when you pass urine; redness, pain or swelling of any area of your body; sores forming anywhere on your body.

**STOP USING FILGRASTIM AND SEE YOUR DOCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (DURING OFFICE HOURS) IF YOU HAVE:**

- Signs of an **allergic reaction** such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, wheezing; a rash over the whole body or swelling of the face.

**CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:**

- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed.
- Bone pain that does not go away with acetaminophen.
- Skin rash or itching.

**REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR DOCTOR.**