



Provincial Health Services Authority

For the Patient:

Other names:

Pegfilgrastimpegylated G-CSF, NEULASTA®
LAPELGA®, FULPHILA®,
NIOPEG®, NYVEPRIA®,
PEXEGRA®, ZIEXTENZO®

- Pegfilgrastim (peg fil gra' stim) 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. Pegfilgrastim is a clear liquid that is injected under your skin.
- **If you are giving your own injection at home**, use pegfilgrastim exactly as directed by your healthcare team. Make sure you understand the package directions and feel comfortable with the injections.
 - **Store** pegfilgrastim syringes in the fridge.
 - Before injection, remove pegfilgrastim syringe from the fridge and allow it to come to **room temperature** (about 30 minutes).
 - **Avoid vigorous shaking** of the syringes because this may damage the pegfilgrastim.
 - **Use a different site for each injection.** You will be taught 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.
 - **Discard** the container as instructed by your cancer treatment centre.
- If you **miss a dose** of pegfilgrastim, call your healthcare team during office hours for advice. Pegfilgrastim is usually given once per chemotherapy cycle. It is important to adhere to the schedule recommended by your doctor.
- **Store** pegfilgrastim syringes in the fridge in the original packaging, out of the reach of children. Do not freeze. If pegfilgrastim is left at room temperature for more than 3 days, check with your healthcare team for advice. Do not leave the syringes in direct sunlight.
- Other drugs may **interact** with pegfilgrastim. 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 pegfilgrastim.
- The effect of pegfilgrastim on sperm or the baby if used during pregnancy is not known. It is best to **use birth control** while being treated with pegfilgrastim. Tell your doctor right away if you or your partner becomes pregnant. Do not breastfeed during treatment.
- **Tell** your doctor, dentist, and other health professionals that you are being treated with pegfilgrastim before you receive any treatment from them.

When your white blood cells are low, **you are at greater risk of having an infection.**

To help prevent infection:

- Wash your hands often and always after using the bathroom.
- Take care of your skin and mouth.
- Avoid crowds and people who are sick.
- Call your healthcare team ***immediately*** at the first sign of an infection such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F), chills, cough, sore throat or burning when you pass urine.

Side effects are listed in the following table in the order in which they may occur. Tips to help manage the side effects are included.

SIDE EFFECTS	MANAGEMENT
Bone pain may occur when the white blood cells start to come back in your bone marrow. It often occurs in the back, hips, or legs. The pain is usually mild and may last a few days.	Take acetaminophen (e.g., TYLENOL®) every 4-6 hours, to a maximum of 4 g (4000 mg) per day. Tell your healthcare team if bone pain does not go away with acetaminophen.
Pain or tenderness may occur where the needle was placed.	Apply warm compresses or soak in warm water for 15-20 minutes several times a day.
Hair loss is rare with pegfilgrastim. Your hair will grow back once you stop treatment with pegfilgrastim. Colour and texture may change.	If hair loss is a problem, refer to <i>Resources for Hair Loss and Appearance Changes – Patient Handout</i> .*

***Please ask your nurse or pharmacist for a copy.**

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM OR GET EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE:

- Signs of an **infection** such as fever (over 38°C or 100°F by an oral thermometer), shaking chills; severe sore throat, productive cough (coughing up thick or green sputum); cloudy or foul smelling urine; painful, tender, or swollen red skin wounds or sores.
- Signs of an **allergic reaction** (rare) soon after a treatment including rash, dizziness, fast heart beat, face swelling, or breathing problems.

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONTINUE OR BOTHER YOU:

- Redness, swelling, pain or sores where the needle was placed.
- Abdominal pain.
- Skin rash or itching.

REPORT ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS TO YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM