

Imipenem and Cilastatin

Names

The generic drug names are imipenem and cilastatin. They are combined into one product whose brand name is Primaxin[®]. There may be other names for this medication.

Why am I Taking This Medication and How is it Given?

Primaxin is an antibiotic, used to treat infections caused by bacteria. Your medicine may be given as an injection, or intravenously (added to an existing IV drip). Infusions generally last between 20-60 minutes, depending on the dose.

How Does it Work?

The combination of imipenem and cilastatin eliminates bacteria by destroying the bacteria's cell walls. The bacteria affected is the kind that causes many kinds of infections, including pneumonia and gynecological, skin, stomach, blood, bone, joint, urinary tract, and heart valve infections. It may be used to treat people who have a fever and have a low white blood cell count.

What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?

Tell your doctor if you:

- have had an allergic reaction to imipenem or cilastatin, or if you have any allergies
- are pregnant or breastfeeding
- have central nervous system disorders such as brain disease or history of seizures
- have kidney disease

This drug may interact with other medications or cause side effects. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal or diet supplements that you are taking.

What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Redness, swelling, or mild pain where injection was given

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

Avoid spicy, greasy, and acidic foods if your stomach is upset. Try eating small snacks frequently instead of 3 large meals. Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent or lessen nausea and vomiting.

If you have diarrhea, check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter medications or products. Some diarrhea medicines may make your diarrhea worse or make it last longer.

When Should I Call the Doctor?

Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room if you have signs of a severe allergic reaction: Swelling/tingling in your face, mouth, tongue, or throat; chest tightness; trouble breathing; shortness of breath; dizziness; or palpitations (irregular or pounding heartbeat); hives

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

- Confusion
- Convulsions (seizures)
- Decreased urination
- Severe diarrhea
- Tremors (quivering or shaking movements that you can't control)

What Else Should I Know ®?

- To help clear up your infection completely, imipenem and cilastatin combination must be given for the full time of treatment, even if you begin to feel better after a few days.
- Some patients may develop tremors or seizures while receiving this medicine. If you already have a history of seizures and you are taking anticonvulsants, you should continue to take them unless otherwise directed by your doctor.
- If you become pregnant while taking this medication, call your doctor right away. This drug may be harmful to the fetus.
- If you would like more information, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.