

# Infliximab

Names	The generic drug name is infliximab (in-FLIX-i-mab). Remicade® is a brand name. There may be other brand names for this medication.
How is Infliximab Administered?	Your medicine will be given slowly by infusion into a vein (intravenous or IV). Usually, it takes about 2 hours to get one dose.
Why Am I Taking Infliximab?	This drug is a monoclonal antibody used to manage transplant rejection, and to relieve symptoms of certain autoimmune disorders.
How Does it Work?	Infliximab is a tumor necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitor. It works by blocking your body's normal immune/inflammatory response. Normally, when your body detects the presence of a foreign substance, it mounts a defense to isolate or kill the invader. We may experience these attacks as a fever, or local swelling, redness, and pain. If you have had a transplant, you do not want your body to attack the new tissue and cause your body to reject the transplant. Using medications like infliximab helps prevent transplant rejection, but it also makes you more vulnerable to infections.
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have ever had an allergic reaction to infliximab or medications made from murine proteins (You can ask your pharmacist if you do not know whether a medication is made from murine proteins.)</li><li>• have, or have ever had, congestive heart failure. Hepatitis B, any disease that affects your nervous system, such as MS; COPD; any type of cancer; bleeding problems or blood disease; or been treated with phototherapy (PDT)</li><li>• are pregnant or breastfeeding</li></ul>

**This drug may interact with other medications. 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?

- Stomach pain, heartburn, nausea
- Headache
- Runny nose
- Back pain
- White patches in your mouth
- Vaginal itching, burning, and pain or other signs of a yeast infection
- Flushing

### How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Be sure to take antibiotic and antiviral medicines as prescribed. If you have trouble taking all your doses because of nausea, vomiting, or another problem, **call your doctor immediately**.
- Ask your doctor about medication to help prevent/lessen nausea.
- Mouth care is very important. To minimize mouth problems, rinse your mouth with a mixture of ½ tsp of baking soda in 8 oz of water after every meal and at bedtime. Brush your teeth and gums with a soft toothbrush. (Soften it further by running it under warm water). Floss your teeth gently. Avoid smoking, alcohol, and mouthwashes that contain alcohol.
- Drink at least two to three quarts of fluid every 24 hours, unless your doctor gives you other instructions.

### When Should I Call the Doctor?

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have:

- **temperature of 100.4F (38° C) or above.** Chills sore throat, or sores in your mouth.
- signs of allergic reaction: rash, itching, dizziness, lightheadedness, dizziness, palpitations, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, chest pain
- abdominal pain, persistent fever, night sweats, and weight loss
- sudden weight gain
- unusual bruising or bleeding
- yellowing of the eyes or skin
- dark-colored urine

Call your doctor **as soon as possible** if you have:

- headache, nausea, or muscle pain that does not respond to prescribed medication
- dizziness or fainting

## What Else Should I Know About Infliximab?

- Allergic reactions may occur up to 2 days after infusion. If you were treated with infliximab injection in the past and are now starting a second course of treatment, you may have a delayed allergic reaction 3-12 days after you receive the medication.
- Check with your doctor immediately if you have any symptoms of liver problems including skin and eyes turning yellow, dark brown-colored urine, right-sided abdominal pain, fever, or severe tiredness.
- It is important to have a tuberculin skin test to make sure that you do not have an inactive tuberculosis infection.
- This drug can increase your risk for infection. To help avoid infections, stay away from crowds or people with colds, flu, or other infections. Wash your hands often. Be careful when handling sharp objects.
- Keep all appointments with your doctor.
- If you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are using infliximab.
- If you have any other questions about infliximab, please talk to your doctor or pharmacist.