

How to use this medication

What is it



Some people with arthritis have too much TNF. TNF is a protein found in the body that can cause pain and swelling in the joints. infliximab is a biologic medicine that blocks TNF and helps the pain and swelling of arthritis.

Given by intravenous infusion



Infliximab is given by intravenous infusion once every 6-8 weeks. The normal dose is based on your body weight.

Given once every 6-8 weeks



You will receive an infusion on week 0, week 2, and then week 6. Following this you will receive infusions every 6 to 8 weeks.

Give it some time



Although some patients can feel better quite quickly in others it can take a little longer. Keep taking your medication.

What you need to do

Don't take if you have an infection



Infliximab can make it harder for you to fight off infections. Call your doctor if:

1. You develop a fever
2. You think you have an infection
3. You are given antibiotics to treat an infection

Make sure to get tuberculosis testing



All patients should have a tuberculosis skin test & chest x-ray before starting infliximab. Talk to your doctor.

Get occasional blood tests



It is important to occasionally have your blood tested while taking infliximab. This is important to keep track of your arthritis and to make sure your blood counts are ok.

Side effects & important facts

Infusion reaction



Infliximab can rarely cause an allergic reaction during the infusion.

Surgery



Infliximab should be stopped before surgery. It can be restarted once things have healed and there is no sign of infection. If you are having surgery, talk to your doctor about when to stop the medicine.

Pregnancy & breastfeeding



Infliximab has been used safely in pregnancy and breastfeeding. Let your doctor know if you are planning to get pregnant or if you are breastfeeding.

Heart problems



Infliximab may make a condition called congestive heart failure worse. Tell your doctor if you have congestive heart failure.

Other very rare side effects



Patients have very rarely developed conditions of the nervous system (multiple sclerosis) and the immune system (lupus) while taking medications like infliximab.

Cancer



Infliximab has very rarely been associated with developing cancer. Tell your doctor if you have had cancer in the past.

When should I call my doctor

Please call if you need to stop



- If you feel sick and want to stop
- If you are concerned about any side effects

Other reasons to call your doctor:



Fever or think you have an infection



If you are having surgery



If you become pregnant



If you plan to get any vaccinations



If you develop a rash