

## Filgrastim-xxxx (Neupogen, Zarxio, Nivestym)

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### About This Drug

Filgrastim belongs to a class of medicines called granulocyte colony-stimulating factors (G-CSF). G-CSF helps the body make more white blood cells. White blood cells help fight infection in your body. This drug is given in the vein (IV) or as an injection under the skin (subcutaneously).

### Possible Side Effects

- Decrease in red blood cells. This may make you feel more tired.
- Diarrhea (loose bowel movements)
- Fever
- General pain and aching
- Bone pain
- Headache
- Numbness
- Nosebleed
- Cough and trouble breathing
- Rash
- Hair loss. Hair loss is often temporary, although with certain medicine, hair loss can sometimes be permanent. Hair loss may happen suddenly or gradually. If you lose hair, you may lose it from your head, face, armpits, pubic area, chest, and/or legs. You may also notice your hair getting thin.

**Note:** Each of the side effects above was reported in 5% or greater of patients treated with filgrastim with or without other chemotherapy drugs. These side effects may be more severe if you are receiving high doses of this medication used in stem cell collection therapy or for other medical reasons. Not all possible side effects are included above.

### Warnings and Precautions

- Enlargement and inflammation (swelling) of your spleen, which can very rarely rupture and be life-threatening. Signs of enlargement may be left-sided pain in your abdomen and/or shoulder.
- Trouble breathing because of fluid build-up in your lungs caused by inflammation (swelling) of the lungs
- Bleeding in lungs which may cause coughing up of blood when used in healthy donors for stem cell collection therapy

- Allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis are rare but may happen in some patients. Signs of allergic reaction to this drug may be swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, do not take another dose of this drug. You should get urgent medical treatment.**
- Severe sickle cell crises can happen in patients with sickle cell disorders treated with filgrastim-xxxx, which can be life-threatening.
- Changes in your kidney function
- A rapid increase in your white blood cells
- A decrease in the number of platelets, which increases your risk of bleeding.
- A syndrome where fluid and protein can leak from your blood vessels into your tissues. This can cause a decrease in your blood protein level and blood pressure and fluid can accumulate in your tissues and/or lungs.
- Inflammation of the blood vessels in your skin which can cause red or purple spots on your skin
- Inflammation of the aorta- symptoms may include fever, abdominal pain, back pain, and feeling tired.
- Talk to your doctor about your risk of cancer. This drug may raise your risk of developing conditions such as myelodysplastic syndrome and acute leukemia.

**Note:** Some of the side effects above are very rare and may depend on the type and dose of filgrastim you are taking. If you have concerns and/or questions, please discuss them with your medical team.

## How to Take Your Medication

- Talk to your doctor, nurse, and/or pharmacist for proper preparation, dosing, and administration if you are self-injecting this medicine.
- Do not shake the medicine. You can take it out of the refrigerator 30 minutes before use to allow it to come to room temperature. Throw away any medicine that has been left at room temperature for longer than 24 hours.
- Do not substitute the vial for the pre-filled syringes.
- Do not reuse the needles, or any unused medicine left in the syringe after your dose is injected.
- **Missed dose:** If you miss a dose, contact your physician right away.
- **Handling:** Wash your hands after before and after handling your medicine. Your caretakers should not handle your medicine with bare hands and should wear latex gloves.
- The cap of the pre-filled syringe contains latex. Please speak to your doctor if you have a latex allergy. Caregivers with latex allergies should use caution.
- **Storage:** Store this medicine in the refrigerator between 36°F to 46°F (2°C to 8°C). Store this medicine in the original carton to protect it from light. Do not freeze.
- **Disposal:** Discuss with your nurse or your doctor how to dispose of unused medicine/needles.

## Treating Side Effects

- To decrease the risk of bleeding, use a soft toothbrush. Check with your nurse before using dental floss.



- Be very careful when using knives or tools.
- Use an electric shaver instead of a razor.
- Manage tiredness by pacing your activities for the day.
- Be sure to include periods of rest between energy-draining activities.
- Drink plenty of fluids (a minimum of eight glasses per day is recommended).
- If you have diarrhea, you should drink more fluids so that you do not become dehydrated (lack of water in the body from losing too much fluid). Eat low-fiber foods that are high in protein and calories and avoid foods that can irritate your digestive tracts or lead to cramping.
- Ask your nurse or doctor about medicine that can lessen or stop diarrhea.
- Keeping your pain under control is important to your well-being. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you are experiencing pain.
- If you have numbness in your hands and feet, be careful when cooking, walking, and handling sharp objects and hot liquids.
- If you have a nosebleed, sit with your head tipped slightly forward. Apply pressure by lightly pinching the bridge of your nose between your thumb and forefinger. Call your doctor if you feel dizzy or faint or if the bleeding doesn't stop after 10 to 15 minutes.
- If you get a rash do not put anything on it unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area around the rash clean and dry. Ask your doctor for medicine if your rash bothers you.
- To help with hair loss, wash with a mild shampoo and avoid washing your hair every day. Avoid coloring your hair.
- Avoid rubbing your scalp, pat your hair or scalp dry.
- Limit your use of hair spray, electric curlers, blow dryers, and curling irons.
- If you are interested in getting a wig, talk to your nurse and they can help you get in touch with programs in your local area.

## Food and Drug Interactions

- There are no known interactions of filgrastim with food.
- This drug may interact with other medicines. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the prescription and over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) that you are taking at this time. Also, check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any new prescription or over-the-counter medicines, or dietary supplements to make sure that there are no interactions.

## When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you have any of these symptoms and/or any new or unusual symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher
- Chills
- Easy bleeding or bruising
- Cough that is bothersome and/or coughing up blood
- Wheezing and/or trouble breathing



- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Nosebleed that doesn't stop bleeding after 10-15 minutes
- A headache that does not go away
- Tiredness that interferes with your daily activities
- Diarrhea, 4 times in one day or diarrhea with lack of strength or a feeling of being dizzy
- Left-sided pain in your abdomen and/or shoulder
- General pain and/or back pain that does not go away or is not relieved by prescribed medicine
- Decreased urine, very dark urine, or blood in your urine
- Foamy or bubbly-looking urine
- Numbness in your arms, hands, legs, or feet
- Swelling of the hands, feet, or any other part of the body
- New rash and/or itching
- Rash that is not relieved by prescribed medicines
- Red or purple spots on your skin
- Signs of allergic reaction: swelling of the face, feeling like your tongue or throat are swelling, trouble breathing, rash, itching, fever, chills, feeling dizzy, and/or feeling that your heart is beating in a fast or not normal way. **If this happens, call 911 for emergency care.**
- If you think you may be pregnant

## Reproduction Warnings

- **Pregnancy warning:** It is not known if this drug may harm an unborn child. For this reason, be sure to talk with your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while receiving this drug. Let your doctor know right away if you think you may be pregnant.
- **Breastfeeding warning:** It is not known if this drug passes into breast milk. For this reason, women should talk to their doctor about the risks and benefits of breastfeeding during treatment with this drug because this drug may enter the breast milk and cause harm to a breastfeeding baby.
- **Fertility warning:** Fertility studies have not been done with this drug. Talk with your doctor or nurse if you plan to have children. Ask for information on sperm or egg banking.

Revised February 2022

