



# Omalizumab

(Xolair)

Omalizumab is an injectable medicine for patients who have *allergic asthma*. It is used in combination with your other inhaled asthma medicines.

Your nurse will give you your injections at your clinic appointments. You will need to stay in the clinic area to be watched for 30 minutes to 2 hours after your injection.

Your dose of omalizumab is based partly on your weight. If your weight changes very much, please tell your nurse.

## What is omalizumab?

Omalizumab is a medicine that is used to treat *allergic asthma* (asthma that is caused by allergens, such as dust, mold, and smoke). It works by blocking the action of *IgE* (immunoglobulin E), a natural substance in the body that causes the symptoms of allergic asthma.

## How will I receive omalizumab?

Omalizumab is given as an injection in your arm every 2 or 4 weeks. You will receive your injection at your clinic appointments.

We will watch you for 2 hours after each of your first 3 injections, and for 30 minutes after your injections after that. This is so we can watch for any signs of *anaphylaxis*, a serious allergic reaction.

Your dose of omalizumab is based partly on your weight. If you have small changes in your weight, a change in your dose should not be needed. But, if you gain or lose a lot of weight, tell your nurse. Your dose may need to be adjusted.

## Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis may occur up to 4 days after your injection. **You must seek medical attention right away if you have:**

- Wheezing, shortness of breath, cough, chest tightness, or trouble breathing.
- Swelling of the throat or tongue, throat tightness, hoarse voice, or trouble swallowing.
- Low blood pressure, dizziness, fainting, rapid or weak heartbeat, anxiety, or feeling of “impending doom.”
- Hives, flushing, or itching.

Since an anaphylactic reaction could happen at home, you will be given a prescription for epinephrine (Epipen) to treat it. Your clinic nurse will teach you how to use it.

## Questions?

Call 206-598-4615

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Allergy Clinic/  
Pulmonary Clinic:  
206-598-4615

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## Beta Blockers and Omalizumab

If you are taking a beta-blocker, you should **not** receive omalizumab. Some medications that are beta blockers are metoprolol, atenolol, or propranolol. Beta blockers may mask the symptoms of a serious allergic reaction.

## Other Asthma Medicines

While you are on omalizumab, you should keep using your other asthma medicines. Omalizumab will work with these other medicines to help control your asthma.

## Omalizumab and Churg-Strauss Syndrome

We do not know if omalizumab causes *Churg-Strauss Syndrome* (an inflammation of blood vessels that affects the lungs and skin), but we rarely see Churg-Strauss Syndrome in patients using omalizumab. Tell your doctor if your asthma symptoms get worse after you start using omalizumab.

## When to Call Your Nurse or Doctor

Omalizumab can cause some side effects. Call your nurse or doctor if you have:

- Pain, redness, swelling, warmth, burning, stinging, bruising, hardness (a bump), or itching where omalizumab was injected
- Pain, especially in your joints, arms, or legs
- Tiredness
- Ear pain

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