

# Certolizumab pegol: Patient drug information

**Brand Names: US:** Cimzia

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat ankylosing spondylitis.
- It is used to treat plaque psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.
- It is used to treat rheumatoid arthritis.
- It is used to treat Crohn's disease.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have an infection.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Abatacept, adalimumab, anakinra, etanercept, golimumab, infliximab, natalizumab, rituximab, or tocilizumab.

## What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- You may have more chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu.
- If you have had hepatitis B before or carry the virus, this drug can cause the virus to become active. This can lead to very bad and sometimes deadly liver problems. You will be tested for hepatitis B before starting this drug. You will need to watch for signs of hepatitis while taking this drug and for several months after stopping it. Talk with your doctor.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines. Use of some vaccines with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well.
- Do not get a weakened bacteria like BCG for bladder cancer while you use this drug. Talk with your doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), talk with your doctor. You may be more likely to get infections.

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Have your skin checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- If you have a latex allergy, talk with your doctor. Some products have latex.
- Heart failure has happened with this drug, as well as heart failure that has gotten worse in people who already have it. Tell your doctor if you have heart disease. Call your doctor right away if you have shortness of breath, a big weight gain, a heartbeat that is not normal, or swelling in the arms or legs that is new or worse.

### **What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?**

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of infection like fever, chills, very bad sore throat, ear or sinus pain, cough, more sputum or change in color of sputum, pain with passing urine, mouth sores, or wound that will not heal.
- Signs of a urinary tract infection (UTI) like blood in the urine, burning or pain when passing urine, feeling the need to pass urine often or right away, fever, lower stomach pain, or pelvic pain.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Signs of lupus like a rash on the cheeks or other body parts, sunburn easy, muscle or joint pain, chest pain or shortness of breath, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Lump in the armpit, groin, or neck.
- Pale skin.
- Call your doctor right away if you have a swollen gland, night sweats, shortness of breath, or weight loss without trying.
- Unsafe blood cell count problems have happened, like aplastic anemia and a type of low white blood cell count. Tell your doctor right away if you feel very tired or weak, or have a fever, chills, shortness of breath, any unexplained bruising or bleeding, or purple "spotches" on your skin.
- Certain types of skin cancer have happened in people taking this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have a change in color or size of a mole, or any new or changing skin lump or growth.

### **What are some other side effects of this drug?**

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Irritation where the shot is given.
- Signs of a common cold.

### **How is this drug best taken?**

•It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh, behind the upper arm, or the belly area.