

Abatacept: Patient drug information

Brand Names: US: Orencia

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat rheumatoid arthritis and psoriatic arthritis.
- It is used to prevent graft versus host disease (GVHD) in certain people who are getting a bone marrow transplant.
- 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 are taking any of these drugs: Adalimumab, certolizumab, etanercept, golimumab, or infliximab.
- If you are taking anakinra, 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 of a chance of getting an infection. Wash hands often. Stay away from people with infections, colds, or flu. Some infections have been very bad and even deadly.
- You will need a TB (tuberculosis) test before starting this drug.
- Hepatitis B testing may be done. A hepatitis B infection may get worse while taking this drug.
- Make sure you are up to date with all your vaccines before treatment with this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before getting any vaccines while you take this drug and after you stop taking it. Vaccine use with this drug may either raise the chance of an infection or make the vaccine not work as well. Talk with your doctor.
- Breathing problems have happened more often in people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) when taking this drug. This includes COPD that gets worse, cough, and trouble breathing. Talk with the doctor.
- Have your skin checked as you have been told by your doctor.

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

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. Rarely, some allergic reactions have been deadly.
- 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 high or low blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Feeling very tired or weak; flu-like signs.
- Warm, red, or painful skin or sores on the body.
- A skin lump or growth; change in color or size of a mole.
- Call your doctor right away if you have a swollen gland, night sweats, shortness of breath, or weight loss without trying.

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:

- Dizziness or headache.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Upset stomach; stomach pain or diarrhea.
- Back pain.

How is this drug best taken?

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.