

## Aldesleukin/Interleukin-2

Names	The generic drug name is aldesleukin. The brand name is Proleukin®. There may be other brand names for this medication such as IL-2.
How Will This Medicine be Administered?	Your medicine will be given intravenously (IV) through a central line, a temporary catheter (thin tube) inserted into your chest. You will be admitted to the hospital during administration so we can monitor you.
What Is It For?	This medication treats kidney cancer or melanoma (a type of skin cancer) that has spread to other parts of the body.
How Does IL-2 Work?	<p>Aldesleukin is the synthetic (man-made) version of a protein the body makes called interleukin-2, or IL-2.</p> <p>IL-2 is classified as biologic therapy meaning that it uses the body's immune system to change the way your body responds to cancer cells. The expectation is an increase in your body's production of T-cells and NK (natural killer) cells – two types of white blood cells used to fight off infections, mutated cells, and anything your body determines is a foreign invader.</p>
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin Receiving IL-2?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have had an allergic reaction to aldesleukin (IL-2)</li><li>• are pregnant or breastfeeding</li><li>• have heart, kidney or liver disease; asthma; depression; mental illness; thyroid disorder or diabetes</li><li>• if you have an autoimmune disorder, such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, hepatitis, Crohn's disease, or ulcerative colitis</li></ul> <p><b>This drug may interact with other medications or cause harmful side effects. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about <u>all</u> prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal, or diet supplements that you are taking.</b></p>

### What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

- Nausea, vomiting, decreased appetite, and/or diarrhea
- Chills (1-4 hours after treatment)
- Mouth/throat sores
- Skin/tissue irritation; dry, chapping, itching, flaking, or red skin
- Flu-like symptoms: fever, headache, or muscle/joint aches
- Swelling of hands, feet, or sometimes the face
- Muscle weakness
- Weight gain
- Mood changes, irritability, confusion, memory problems, or depression
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Sleep problems, nightmares, difficulty waking up

### How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Medications for nausea, muscle soreness, diarrhea, and insomnia (trouble sleeping) are ordered during your hospitalization. Talk to your doctor about the need for these medications after you are discharged from the hospital. Please discuss any other issues you are having so the team can assist you.
- Mouth sores can occur. Mouth rinses with a mixture of ½ tsp of baking soda in 8 oz of water after every meal and at bedtime can help. Brush your teeth and gums with a soft toothbrush. (Soften it further by running it under warm water before brushing). Avoid mouthwashes that contain alcohol.
- Over-the-counter skin creams can help with skin discomfort. Please consult with your doctor before using anything on your skin.
- Talk with your doctor or nurse if you feel you need help with mood changes.

### When Should I Call the Doctor?

Call your doctor **immediately** if you experience:

- **any sign of infection:** fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, chills, cough, sore throat, pain or burning upon urination; redness or tenderness along a vein, at an IV site, or at any other wound or skin irritation
- **any sign of an allergic reaction:** itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing, dizziness, or palpitations
- **unusual bruising or bleeding** that causes dizziness or fainting or that does not stop after 10 to 15 minutes; black or bloody stools; vomit that is bloody or that looks like coffee grounds; blood in your urine or mucus, heavy vaginal bleeding, spontaneous bleeding from your gums

or nose, or superficial bleeding into the skin that appears as a rash of pinpoint-sized reddish-purple spots (petechiae)

- pain that is not relieved by your usual medicines
- difficulty waking, agitation, seizures, or hallucinations
- decreased urine production (less than 1 cup in a day) or having dark, cloudy, or foul-smelling urine

Call your doctor **as soon as possible** if you experience:

- swelling of your feet, hands, or neck or a weight gain of 5 pounds or more in 1 week
- diarrhea of 5-6 stools in 1 day or diarrhea with weakness
- yellowing of the eyes or skin
- extreme tiredness that interferes with normal activities, insomnia
- rash that is bothersome
- changes in your mood or mental confusion
- changes in vision, taste, or speech
- constipation that is not relieved by prescribed medications

#### What Else Should I Know About IL-2?

- This drug may have harmful effects on an unborn child. Use effective methods of birth control during your treatment and for a while afterwards. If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor before you start your treatments. Do not breastfeed while taking IL-2.
- This therapy requires two weeks of hospitalization with a week in between during which you will return home. Whether or not you can return to work will be dependent on how you feel, your job, the type of work you do, how flexible your employer is, etc. We recommend planning to stay home at least a few days until you know how you feel. We can provide a note for you if you let us know before discharge what your plans will be.
- Blood pressure medications are held for two to three days before and during IL-2 therapy. Talk to your doctor about when you can start taking them again.
- Most symptoms resolve within four days of discharge. Itchy skin and fatigue are the most common prolonged effects.
- Blood samples are taken throughout your stay and the week you return home, usually on a Thursday. A CT scan is ordered six to eight weeks after therapy to evaluate for disease improvement.
- If you would like more information about IL-2, talk to your doctor.