



# Omalizumab for hives

This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adults. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

## Name of medicine

**Omalizumab**

**Brand name:** Xolair

## Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

Omalizumab is used to treat hives (or urticaria) that have not improved with other treatments. The cause of hives is often not known but common triggers include insect bites, chemicals, medicines and plants. Allergic reactions are associated with increased levels of a protein called immunoglobulin E in the body. Omalizumab prevents the effects of immunoglobulin E. You may see omalizumab described as a biologic, targeted medicine or monoclonal antibody.

## What is omalizumab available as?

Omalizumab is provided in a syringe that contains a fixed amount of the medicine.

## When is omalizumab given?

Omalizumab injection is usually given every 4 weeks.

## How much should I give?

Omalizumab is provided in a syringe that contains a fixed amount of the medicine. Your doctor will tell you whether to give one or two injections.

 It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.

## How should I give it?

Omalizumab is given by subcutaneous injection (under the skin). The injection is usually given by a healthcare professional to start with, so they can monitor any side-effects. However, your healthcare professional may allow you to administer the medicine at home or older children may be able to administer it themselves. You will be shown how to do this, and instructions are provided with the medicine.

 Do not administer the injection yourself unless you have been shown how to do it, in case you inject it into the wrong place.

## When should the medicine start to work?

Omalizumab starts to work straight away, but it may take a few weeks before you see any improvement in your child's symptoms. It takes a few months for the full effect to be

reached. It is important to continue with your child's other prescribed medicines during this time.

## What if my child is sick (vomits)?

You do not need to worry if your child is sick, as the medicine will still work.

## What if I forget to give omalizumab?

If you administer omalizumab at home and have forgotten, give the injection as soon as you remember. Set a reminder to give the next injections 4 weeks from that date.

## What if I think I have given too much?

As omalizumab comes in a pre-filled syringe, you will not be able to give your child too much. However, if you have given more than the prescribed amount in a month, contact your doctor for advice.

## Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they cause effects that we don't want (side-effects).

## Side-effects you must do something about

Your child may get an allergic reaction within the first 24 hours of an omalizumab injection. Usually, the first few doses are administered in a healthcare setting, in case this happens.

 If your child has any wheeziness or shortness of breath, feels light-headed, has a rapid heart rate, develops itching or flushing (red skin), or has swelling to the throat or tongue, call an ambulance or take them to hospital straight away.

## Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may get a fever (high temperature), pain in their joints or a rash up to 5 days after an injection of omalizumab. Contact your doctor if this happens.
- Children who are at risk of parasite infection (worms) may get an infection. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned.
- Your child may get general aches and pains in their arms and legs or other joints, feel dizzy or tired, or experience itching and skin rashes.

Children sometimes get other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side effects to a UK safety scheme at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard).

More information on side-effects can be found in the following [Medicines for Children leaflet](#).

### Can other medicines be given at the same time as omalizumab?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Omalizumab should not be taken with some medicines that you get on prescription. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking before giving medicine.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal and complementary medicines.

### Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?

- You will be given a special container for the used syringes and needles. Your doctor or pharmacist will give you this container and tell you how to use it and how to dispose of it. Needles and syringes should not be in the household waste.
- If omalizumab has not helped your child after four injections, your doctor may recommend stopping treatment as it is unlikely to work.
- If your child's hives have responded well after six injections, your doctor may suggest stopping treatment to see if they are in remission. Your doctor will start the treatment again if symptoms come back.

### General advice about medicines

- If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your doctor but continue to give the medicine as usual in the meantime. Do not give extra doses, as you may do harm.
- Only give this medicine to your child. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.

- If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact a doctor straight away.
- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

### Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep this medicine in a fridge, in the packaging it came in. Do not use if it has been frozen at any time.
- Do not use the medicine if it has been out of the fridge for more than 48 hours (2 days) in total.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine or syringes.

### Who to contact for more information

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about omalizumab and about other medicines used to treat hives (urticaria). You can also get useful information from:

#### England: NHS 111

Tel 111 [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

#### Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111 [www.nhs24.scot](http://www.nhs24.scot)

#### Wales: NHS 111 Wales

Tel 111 [www.111.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.111.wales.nhs.uk)

#### Northern Ireland: NI Direct

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

[www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)