



NEBRASKA CANCER SPECIALISTS

the Physicians of Oncology Hematology West

Sargramostim

Trade names: Leukine™

Drug type: Sargramostim is a biologic response modifier. It is classified as a colony stimulating factor.

How this drug is given:

- As an injection under the skin (subcutaneous, SubQ).
- Sargramostim can also be given through an infusion into a vein (intravenous, IV).

Side effects:

Important things to remember about the side effects of sargramostim:

- Most people do not experience all of the side effects listed.
- Side effects are almost always reversible and will usually go away after treatment is complete.
- There are many options to help minimize or prevent side effects.

The following side effects are common for patients taking sargramostim:

- With the first dose of sargramostim a person may experience low blood pressure, fast heart rate, flushing, lightheadedness or feeling faint. This is referred to as "first-dose effect," and tends not to happen with future doses.
- Diarrhea
- Local reactions at the injection site (swelling, redness and tenderness)
- Weakness and fatigue

These are less common side effects of patients receiving sargramostim:

- Mild flu-like syndrome (fever, headache, generalized aches and pains, weakness and fatigue)
- Swelling in your hands and feet

A *rare* (< 1%) but significant side effect is problem with blood clots. Blood clots rarely can lead to pulmonary embolus or stroke - potentially life-threatening conditions.

Another *serious*, but very uncommon side effect of sargramostim is "capillary leak syndrome" or "vascular leak syndrome." Capillary leak syndrome is a potentially serious disease in which fluids within the vascular system (veins and capillaries) leaks into the tissue outside the bloodstream. This results in low blood pressure and poor blood flow to the internal organs.

When to contact your doctor or health care provider:

Seek emergency help ***immediately*** and notify your health care provider, if you experience the following symptoms:

- Shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, closing up of the throat, swelling of facial features, hives (possible allergic reaction).

Contact your health care provider ***immediately***, day or night, if you should experience any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 101° F or higher, chills (possible signs of infection)
- Dizziness (especially when changing position), sudden swelling or rapid weight gain, little or no urine output (for 8-12 hours), shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, irregular heartbeat, or chest pain

The following symptoms require medical attention, but are not an emergency. Contact your health care provider ***within 24 hours*** of noticing any of the following:

- Diarrhea (4-6 episodes in a 24-hour period)
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Swelling, redness and/or pain in one leg or arm and not the other

Always inform your health care provider if you experience any unusual symptoms.