



Etanercept "Enbrel"

What is Enbrel? Enbrel is a fusion protein medication administered by subcutaneous injection. It works by blocking the activity of TNF α , a molecule crucial to the immune response and inflammation. Enbrel is FDA approved for the treatment of severe plaque psoriasis. Overall, Enbrel is an effective treatment for severe psoriasis, but there are many potential side effects.

What are the potential side effects of Enbrel? The following are the major side effects of Enbrel. For a thorough discussion of potential side effects and adverse events, please refer to the package insert or the Enbrel website: <http://www.enbrel.com>

Serious infections and sepsis, including death: Since Enbrel suppresses the immune system, there is an increased risk of systemic infections, including but not limited to tuberculosis, pneumonia, upper respiratory viral infections, and infections in the blood which can lead to death. Reactivation of hepatitis B has also been reported.

Enbrel should not be used for patients with HIV, diabetes, and any other conditions that predispose the patient to infection.

Cancers: There are case reports of patients developing lymphoma, leukemia, and skin cancers when using Enbrel.

Central nerve system diseases: Some reports have linked Enbrel to the development of multiple sclerosis. It is preferable to avoid Enbrel if one has history of nerve diseases or family history of nerve diseases. Some patients present with headache, mental status changes, permanent disability, seizure disorder, transverse myelitis, and optic neuritis.

Lupus: Reports have linked Enbrel to increased autoantibody titer and development of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), an autoimmune disease.

Congestive heart failure: Progression and development of congestive heart failure were linked to Enbrel use. Most patients will experience an improvement or disappearance of the CHF after therapy is stopped, and although rare, this may lead to death.

Bone marrow suppression: There have been rare reports of anemia, pancytopenia, and even death associated with Enbrel.

Injection site reactions: This is a common side effect with Enbrel. This is NOT dangerous and tends to resolve over time.

Enbrel belongs to a new class of medication. It is possible that with time, more side effects will be uncovered. The risks and benefits of the Enbrel need to be weighed on an individual basis before deciding to take this medication.