

PATIENT INFORMATION

Filgrastim (Neupogen)

Adjuvant therapy

What is adjuvant therapy?

Adjuvant therapy, also known as 'add-ons', adjunct, complementary or alternative therapies, are recognised as an addition to standard assisted reproductive treatment and may be recommended to you with the intention to increase your success during your fertility treatment. There are numerous options available to you when accessing adjuvant therapies, including but not limited to the technology in laboratories, medical procedures, prescribed medications, nutritional supplements, and traditional medicines such as Chinese medicine, including acupuncture.

At present, the effectiveness of many adjuvant therapies is unknown, with little to no evidence that they will increase the success of your treatment or improve live birth rates. However, your health care provider may recommend adjuvant therapy when considering your medical history and tailoring your treatment plan.

It is important to consider the effectiveness, risks and financial costs of adjuvant therapies.

What is filgrastim and how it is normally used?

Your fertility specialist may recommend the use of Filgrastim if you have experienced miscarriages or multiple failed implantations with IVF. Filgrastim is a synthetic form of G-CSF (granulocyte colony stimulating factor) that triggers the body to generate neutrophils, a type of white blood cell which plays an important role in the immune system. It is thought that the use of Filgrastim is thought to improve egg quality and support increased endometrial lining thickness. However, there is low-quality research and evidence supporting the use of Filgrastim; therefore, its use in artificial reproduction is uncertain.

Why is filgrastim recommended, and will it increase the success of my treatment?

A Filgrastim intrauterine flush is performed twice, on Day 4 & Day 8 or Day 5 & Day 9 of your Intrauterine Insemination or Frozen Embryo Transfer cycle unless otherwise advised by your fertility specialist.

A Filgrastim Endometrial Cavity Flush involves inserting a speculum into the vagina. An endometrial catheter is then inserted through the cervix and into the uterine cavity. The Filgrastim is administered via the catheter into the uterine cavity. You must stay in a reclined position for 10 minutes before returning home.

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What are the common side effects?

Some common side effects of Filgrastim include:

- aching or pain in the bones and muscles
- diarrhea
- constipation
- hair loss
- headache
- tired feeling
- skin rash
- nosebleeds
- injection site reactions (redness, swelling, itching, lumps, or bruising).

Regarding any additional side effects or contraindications for Filgrastim, please refer to the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) sheet.

Tell your doctor if you have rare but very serious side effects of Filgrastim including:

- pain in the upper left side of the stomach (abdomen)
- left shoulder pain
- dizziness
- fever and painful skin lesions, often painful, most commonly on your arms, legs and sometimes on your face and neck
- blood in the urine
- tiredness, fever and easy bruising or bleeding.

Are there risks to using filgrastim during pregnancy?

Filgrastim is a Category B3 drug. Drugs which have been taken by only a limited number of pregnant women and women of childbearing age, without an increase in the frequency of malformation or other direct or indirect harmful effects on the human fetus having been observed.

Studies in animals have shown evidence of an increased occurrence of fetal damage, the significance of which is considered uncertain in humans.

Filgrastim is used in preconception.

What are the costs?

Cost of Filgrastim: The cost of Filgrastim will vary depending on the pharmacy but is approximately \$47.50 (300mcg). The procedure for the Filgrastim intrauterine flush is \$200.



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Is Filgrastim included in the cost of my cycle: Filgrastim is an additional expense and is not included in the cost of your cycle.

The information provided above is intended for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute or replacement for medical advice received from a medical professional. It is important to discuss your individual circumstances and situation with your treating doctor.