Verteporfin injection

MEDICATION GUIDE

NOTE: This sheet is a summary. It may not cover all possible information. If you have questions about this medicine talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or health care provider.

What is this medicine?
VERTEPORFIN (VER te PORE fin) is used to treat macular degeneration. It is activated by light. This medication is given, then the eye(s) are treated with a laser light. This is called photodynamic therapy (PDT). This treatment results in a slowing of the disease and helps to maintain vision.

This medicine may be used for other purposes; ask your health care provider or pharmacist if you have questions.

How should I use this medicine?
This medicine is for injection into a vein. This is the first step of photodynamic therapy (PDT). Your doctor will numb your eye with eyedrops, and then place a special contact lens on the eye. The second step consists of shining a laser light into your eye for just over a minute to activate the medication. The laser does not use heat, so it will not burn your eye. Another course of treatment may be given in 3 months, if your vision problems recur.

Talk to your pediatrician regarding the use of this medicine in children. Special care may be needed.

Overdosage: If you think you have taken too much of this medicine contact a poison control center or emergency room at once.

NOTE: This medicine is only for you. Do not share this medicine with others.

What if I miss a dose?
It is important not to miss a scheduled appointment. If you miss a scheduled appointment, contact your doctor or health care professional as soon as possible.

What should I tell my health care provider before I take this medicine?
They need to know if you have any of these conditions:

- Liver disease
- Porphyria
- Recent radiation therapy
- An unusual or allergic reaction to verteporfin, eggs, porphyrins, other medicines, foods, dyes, or preservatives
- Pregnant or trying to get pregnant
- Breast-feeding

What may interact with this medicine?

- Alcohol
- Any medicines that may make you sensitive to the sun (e.g., some antibiotics, sulfa medicines, and water pills)
- Aspirin and aspirin-like medicines
- Beta-carotene
- Calcium-channel blockers (e.g., diltiazem, nifedipine, and verapamil)
- Dimethyl sulfoxide
- Mannitol
- Medicines that affect platelets
- Medicines that treat or prevent blood clots like warfarin, enoxaparin, and dalteparin
- NSAIDS, medicines for pain and inflammation, like ibuprofen or naproxen
- Polymyxin b
- Tetracyclines
- Vitamins A and E

This list may not describe all possible interactions. Give your health care provider a list of all the medicines, herbs, non-prescription drugs, or dietary supplements you use. Also tell them if you smoke, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs. Some items may interact with your medicine.

What side effects may I notice from receiving this medicine?

Side effects that you should report to your doctor or health care professional as soon as possible:

- Allergic reactions like skin rash, itching or hives, swelling of the face, lips, or tongue
- Blisters, redness, swelling of skin (similar to a severe sunburn)
- Breathing problems
- Changes in blood pressure or heart rate
- Severe chest pain
- Sweating, dizziness, or flushing

Side effects that usually do not require medical attention (report to your doctor if they continue or are bothersome):
- Blurred vision
- Increased eye and skin sensitivity to sunlight or bright light, usually lasting about 5 days

This list may not describe all possible side effects. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What should I watch for while using this medicine?

This medication will cause you to be very sensitive to light. Avoid exposing skin and eyes to sunlight and bright indoor lights (unshaded light bulbs at close range) for 5 days. If you are near a window in your home during daylight, make sure you have curtains or shades to block out direct sunlight. However, you should not stay in the dark. Exposing your skin to indoor light helps to inactivate the drug in the skin. You can watch TV or go to the movies. Try to avoid outside activities or chores until after sundown. If you do go outside during daylight hours within the first 5 days after your treatment, wear long-sleeved shirts and slacks, preferably tight-knit, light colored fabrics, gloves, socks and shoes, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat. Sunscreens will NOT protect against these reactions. After 5 days, you may resume normal outdoor activities without any special precautions.

Following the injection, you may notice increased sensitivity of your eyes to sun, bright lights or car headlights for several days.

After the treatment, you may experience temporary changes in vision. This may interfere with your ability to drive or operate machinery. You should avoid these activities until these symptoms go away.

Where should I keep my medicine?

This drug is given in a hospital or clinic and will not be stored at home.

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