

Interferon

This material will help you understand your medication, Interferon, and its common side effects.

What is Interferon? How does it work?

Interferon is a type of medication that acts like a protein your body makes itself. This protein affects cell function and growth, as well as the body's natural defenses (the immune system). By adding more interferon, it can help to reduce the growth of cancer cells and boost your immune system.

Interferon is often used in the treatment of eye lymphomas, which affect the immune system.

How is Interferon administered?

Interferon is often given by injecting it directly into your eye using a small needle. This will take place in your doctor's office. You will also be given numbing eye drops before the injection, so you should not feel much pain.

Interferon can also be given as an eye drop. Your doctor will prescribe this medication, which you will need to apply as instructed. Usually, you will use the drops four times a day. The Interferon eye drops are a mixture of medications made by specialty pharmacies.

You will see your doctor for regular follow-up visits during your treatment.

What are the common side effects of this medication?

A common side effect of the Interferon injection is having flu-like symptoms, such as fever, chills and muscle aches. These symptoms usually last about one day after the injection. They should improve and go away as you continue to use this medication.

Other side effects may include:

- A reaction (pain, swelling or redness) at the injection site
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Upset stomach/diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Dizziness
- Dry mouth
- Nausea and vomiting

Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms last a long time or get worse.

Side effects of the Interferon eye drop may include eye redness, irritation, or watering. These should go away once you are done using the eye drops.

If you have any other questions about this medication, talk to you doctor or pharmacist.

For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.



<http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatmentsandsideeffects/guidetocancerdrugs/index>



<http://www.webmd.com/drugs/2/drug-37/interferon-alfa-2b-inj/details>

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