

# Omalizumab (Xolair®)

## What is it?

Omalizumab -- is a member of a class of drugs known as monoclonal antibodies.

- It binds to IgE, an inflammatory mediator responsible for the allergic response many patients experience with their asthma. IgE can make asthma symptoms worse; by blocking IgE's ability to increase inflammation, asthma symptoms are better controlled.

## How should Omalizumab be used?

- Omalizumab is only available as an shot (injection)
- It must be given in your doctor's office
- It is given every 2 to 4 weeks
- The dose is based on your weight and the amount of IgE found in your blood.
- Your doctor or pharmacist will determine the dose that is best for you.

## Side Effects

- For the most part, Omalizumab is well tolerated.
- Some patients will experience:
  - pain at the injection site
  - headache
  - Increased risk of airway infection.
- Anaphylaxis, a severe allergic response or reaction, is rare but has been reported in a number of patient cases. Your doctor may ask you to stay in the office for an observation period (i.e., 4 hours) after receiving the shot.

## Special Instructions

- If you experience symptoms of anaphylaxis like rash, hives, or swelling of the throat and/or tongue, get to the nearest emergency room immediately.
- Report any other unusual symptoms to your doctor.
- You may not notice an immediate improvement in asthma symptoms after beginning omalizumab. Do not discontinue taking your other asthma medications after starting treatment with omalizumab.

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