

1 **052907.Med Guide Powder-final draft**

2
3 **MEDICATION GUIDE**

4 **PegIntron™**

5 **Peginterferon alfa-2b**

6
7 **Including appendix with instructions for using PegIntron™ Powder for Injection**

8
9 Read this Medication Guide carefully before you start taking PegIntron™ (Peg In-tron) or
10 PegIntron™/REBETOL® (REB-eh-tole) combination therapy. Read the Medication Guide
11 each time you refill your prescription because there may be new information. The
12 information in this Medication Guide does not take the place of talking with your health care
13 provider (doctor, nurse, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant).

14
15 If you are taking PegIntron REBETOL combination therapy, also read the Medication Guide
16 for REBETOL (ribavirin, USP) Capsules.

17
18 **What is the most important information I should know about PegIntron and**
19 **PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy?**

20
21 PegIntron (peginterferon) is a treatment for some people who are infected with hepatitis C
22 virus. However, PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy can have serious
23 side effects that may cause death in rare cases. Before you decide to start treatment, you
24 should talk to your health care provider about the possible benefits and side effects of
25 PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy. If you begin treatment you will
26 need to see your health care provider regularly for medical examinations and lab tests to
27 make sure your treatment is working and to check for side effects.

28
29 **REBETOL capsules may cause birth defects and/or death of an unborn child. If you**
30 **are pregnant, you or your male partner must not take PegIntron/REBETOL**
31 **combination therapy. You must not become pregnant while either you or your partner**
32 **are being treated with the combination PegIntron/REBETOL therapy, or for 6 months**
33 **after stopping therapy. Men and women should use birth control while taking the**
34 **combination therapy and for 6 months afterwards. If you or your partner are being**
35 **treated and you become pregnant, either during treatment or within 6 months of**
36 **stopping treatment, call your health care provider right away. There is a Ribavirin**
37 **Pregnancy Registry that collects information about pregnancy outcomes of female**
38 **patients and female partners of male patients exposed to ribavirin. You or your**
39 **healthcare provider are encouraged to contact the Registry at 1-800-593-2214.**

40
41 **If you are taking PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapy you should call your**
42 **health care provider immediately if you develop any of these symptoms:**

43
44 **New or worsening mental health problems, such as thoughts about killing or hurting**
45 **yourself or others, trouble breathing, chest pain, severe stomach or lower back pain,**



46 **bloody diarrhea or bloody bowel movements, high fever, bruising, bleeding, or**
47 **decreased vision.**

48
49 The most serious possible side effects of PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL therapy
50 include:

51

52 **Problems with Pregnancy.** Combination PegIntron/REBETOL therapy can cause
53 death, serious birth defects, or other harm to your unborn child. If you are a woman
54 of childbearing age, you must not become pregnant during treatment and for 6 months
55 after you have stopped therapy. You must have a negative pregnancy test immediately
56 before beginning treatment, during treatment and for 6 months after you have stopped
57 therapy. Both males and female patients must use effective forms of birth control
58 during treatment and for the 6 months after treatment is completed. Male patients
59 should use a condom. If you are a female, you must use birth control even if you believe
60 that you are not fertile or that your fertility is low. You should talk to your health care
61 provider about birth control for you and your partner.

62

63 **Mental health problems and suicide.** PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL therapies may
64 cause patients to develop mood or behavioral problems. These can include irritability
65 (getting easily upset) and depression (feeling low, feeling bad about yourself, or feeling
66 hopeless). Some patients may have aggressive behavior. Former drug addicts may fall back
67 into drug addiction or overdose. Some patients think about hurting or killing themselves or
68 other people and some have killed (suicide) or hurt themselves or others. You must tell your
69 health care provider if you are being treated for a mental illness or had treatment in the past
70 for any mental illness, including depression and suicidal behavior. You should tell your
71 health care provider if you have ever been addicted to drugs or alcohol.

72

73 **Heart problems.** Some patients taking PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapy may
74 develop problems with their heart, including low blood pressure, fast heart rate, and very
75 rarely, heart attacks. Tell your health care provider if you have had any heart problems in the
76 past.

77

78 **Blood problems.** PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL therapies commonly lower two types
79 of blood cells (white blood cells and platelets). In some patients, these blood counts may fall
80 to dangerously low levels. If your blood counts become very low, this could lead to
81 infections or bleeding.

82

83 REBETOL therapy causes a decrease in the number of red blood cells you have (anemia).
84 This can be dangerous, especially for patients who already have heart or circulatory
85 (cardiovascular) problems. Talk with your health care provider before taking combination
86 PegIntron/REBETOL therapy if you have, or have ever had any cardiovascular problems.

87

88 **Body organ problems.** Certain symptoms like severe stomach pain may mean that your
89 internal organs are being damaged.

90



91 *For other possible side effects, see "What are the possible side effects of PegIntron and*
92 *PegIntron/REBETOL" in this Medication Guide.*

93

94 **What is PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy?**

95 The PegIntron product is a drug used to treat adults who have a lasting (chronic) infection
96 with hepatitis C virus and who show signs that the virus is damaging the liver.

97 PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy consists of two medications also used to treat
98 hepatitis C infection. Patients with hepatitis C have the virus in their blood and in their liver.
99 PegIntron reduces the amount of virus in the body and helps the body's immune system fight
100 the virus. REBETOL (ribavirin) is a drug that helps to fight the viral infection but does not
101 work when used by itself to treat chronic hepatitis C.

102

103 It is not known if PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapies can cure hepatitis C
104 (permanently eliminate the virus), or if it can prevent liver failure or liver cancer that is
105 caused by hepatitis C infection.

106

107 It is also not known if PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy will prevent
108 one infected person from infecting another person with hepatitis C.

109

110 **Who should not take PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapy?**

111 Do not take PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapy if you:

- 112 • are pregnant, planning to get pregnant during treatment or during the 6 months after
113 treatment, or breast-feeding
- 114
- 115 • are a male patient with a female sexual partner who is pregnant or plans to become
116 pregnant at any time while you are being treated with REBETOL or during the 6
117 months after your treatment has ended.
- 118
- 119 • have hepatitis caused by your immune system attacking your liver (autoimmune
120 hepatitis) or unstable liver disease
- 121
- 122 • had an allergic reaction to another alpha interferon or are allergic to any of the
123 ingredients in PegIntron or REBETOL Capsules. If you have any doubts, ask your
124 health care provider.
- 125
- 126 • Do not take PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy if you have abnormal red
127 blood cells such as sickle-cell anemia or thalassemia major.
- 128

129

129 **If you have any of the following conditions or serious medical problems, discuss them**
130 **with your health care provider before taking PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL**
131 **therapy:**

- 132 • depression or anxiety
- 133 • sleep problems
- 134 • high blood pressure
- 135 • previous heart attack, or other heart problems



- 136 • liver problems (other than hepatitis C infection)
- 137 • any kind of autoimmune disease (where the body's immune system attacks the body's
- 138 own cells), such as psoriasis, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis
- 139 • thyroid problems
- 140 • diabetes
- 141 • colitis (inflammation of the bowels)
- 142 • cancer
- 143 • hepatitis B infection
- 144 • HIV infection
- 145 • kidney problems
- 146 • bleeding problems
- 147 • alcoholism
- 148 • drug abuse or addiction
- 149 • body organ transplant and are taking medicine that keeps your body from rejecting your
- 150 transplant (suppresses your immune system).

151

152

153 **How should I take PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL?**

154 Your health care provider will decide whether you will take PegIntron therapy alone or the
155 combination of PegIntron/REBETOL, as well as the correct dose (based on your weight).

156 PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL are given for one year. Take your prescribed dose of
157 PegIntron ONCE A WEEK, on the same day of each week and at approximately the same
158 time. Take the medicine for the full year and do not take more than the prescribed dose.

159 REBETOL Capsules should be taken with food. When you take REBETOL with food, more
160 of the medicine (70% more on average) is taken up by your body. You should take
161 REBETOL the same way every day (twice a day with food) to keep the medicine in your
162 body at a steady level. This will help your health care provider to decide how your treatment
163 is working and how to change the number of REBETOL capsules you take if you have side
164 effects from REBETOL. **Be sure to read the Medication Guide for REBETOL**
165 **(ribavirin, USP) for complete instructions on how to take the REBETOL capsules.**

166

167 You should be completely comfortable with how to prepare PegIntron, how to set the dose
168 you take, and how to inject yourself before you use PegIntron for the first time. PegIntron
169 comes in two different forms, a powder in a single-use vial and a Redipen[®] single-use
170 delivery system. See the attached appendix for detailed instructions for preparing and giving
171 a dose of PegIntron.

172

173 If you miss a dose of the PegIntron product, take the missed dose as soon as possible during
174 the same day or the next day, then continue on your regular dosing schedule. If several days
175 go by after you miss a dose, check with your health care provider about what to do. Do not
176 double the next dose or take more than one dose a week without talking to your health care
177 provider. Call your health care provider right away if you take more than your prescribed
178 PegIntron dose. Your health care provider may wish to examine you more closely, and take
179 blood for testing.

180



181 If you miss a dose of REBETOL capsules, take the missed dose as soon as possible during
182 the same day. If an entire day has gone by, check with your health care provider about what
183 to do. Do not double the next dose.

184

185 You must get regular blood tests to help your health care provider check how the treatment is
186 working and to check for side effects.

187

188 Tell your health care provider if you are taking or planning to take other prescription or non-
189 prescription medicines, including vitamin and mineral supplements and herbal medicines.

190

191 **What should I avoid while taking PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapies?**

192 • If you are pregnant do not start taking PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy.

193 • Avoid becoming pregnant while taking PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL.

194 PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL may harm your unborn child (death or serious birth
195 defects) or cause you to lose your baby (miscarry). **If you or your partner becomes**
196 **pregnant during treatment or during the 6 months after treatment with**
197 **PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy, immediately report the pregnancy to your**
198 **health care provider. You or your health care provider should call 1-800-593-2214.** By
199 calling this number, information about you and/or your partner will be added to a pregnancy
200 registry that will be used to help you and your health care provider make decisions about
201 your treatment for hepatitis in the future. You, your partner and/or your health care provider
202 will be asked to provide follow-up information on the outcome of the pregnancy.

203

204 • Do not breast-feed your baby while taking PegIntron.

205

206 **What are the possible side effects of PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL combination**
207 **therapy?**

208

209 **Possible, serious side effects include:**

210 **Mental health problems including suicide, blood problems, heart problems, body organ**
211 **problems.** See "What is the most important information I should know about PegIntron and
212 PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy?"

213

214 **Other body organ problems.** A few patients have lung problems (such as pneumonia or
215 inflammation of the lung tissue), inflammation of the kidney, and eye disorders.

216

217 **New or worsening autoimmune disease.** Some patients taking PegIntron or
218 PegIntron/REBETOL develop autoimmune diseases (a condition where the body's immune
219 cells attack other cells or organs in the body), including rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus
220 erythematosus, and psoriasis. In some patients who already have an autoimmune disease, the
221 disease worsens on PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy.

222

223 Common but less serious side effects include:

224



225 **Flu-like symptoms.** Most patients who take PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL therapy
226 have "flu-like" symptoms (headache, muscle aches, tiredness and fever). Some of these
227 symptoms (fever, headache) usually lessen after the first few weeks of therapy. You can
228 reduce some of these symptoms by injecting your PegIntron dose at bedtime. Over-the-
229 counter pain and fever reducers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, can be used to prevent
230 or reduce the fever and headache.

231

232 **Extreme fatigue (tiredness).** Many patients become extremely tired while on PegIntron or
233 PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy.

234

235 **Appetite problems.** Nausea, loss of appetite, and weight loss, occur commonly.

236

237 **Thyroid problems.** Some patients develop changes in the function of their thyroid.
238 Symptoms of thyroid changes include the inability to concentrate, feeling cold or hot all the
239 time, a change in your weight, and changes to your skin.

240

241 **Blood sugar problems.** Some patients develop problems with the way their body controls
242 their blood sugar, and may develop high blood sugar or diabetes.

243

244 **Skin reactions.** Redness, swelling, and itching are common at the site of injection. If after
245 several days these symptoms do not disappear contact your health care provider. You may
246 get a rash during therapy. If this occurs, your health care provider may recommend
247 medicine to treat the rash.

248

249 **Hair thinning.** Hair thinning is common during PegIntron and PegIntron/REBETOL
250 treatment. Hair loss stops and hair growth returns after therapy is stopped.

251

252 These are not all of the side effects of PegIntron or PegIntron/REBETOL combination
253 therapy. Your health care provider or pharmacist can give you a more complete list.

254

255 **General advice about prescription medicines:**

256 Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication
257 Guide. If you have any concerns about PegIntron, ask your health care provider. Your health
258 care provider or pharmacist can give you information about PegIntron that was written for
259 health care professionals. Do not use PegIntron for a condition for which it was not
260 prescribed. Do not share this medication with other people.

261

262 If you are taking PegIntron/REBETOL combination therapy, also read the Medication Guide
263 for REBETOL (ribavirin, USP) Capsules.

264

265 *This Medication Guide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.*

266

267 Manufactured by: Schering Corporation, Kenilworth, NJ 07033 USA

268 **DATE 05/07**

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SCHERING-PLOUGH RESEARCH INSTITUTE

How do I prepare and inject the PegIntron Dose?

Before you inject PegIntron, the powder must be mixed with 0.7 mL of the supplied DILUENT for PegIntron, Sterile Water for Injection (diluent). You should carefully follow the directions given to you by your health care provider.

The vial of mixed PegIntron should be used immediately. DO NOT prepare more than one vial at a time. If you don't use the vial of the prepared solution right away, it must be stored in a refrigerator and used within 24 hours.

Storing PegIntron

PegIntron Powder should be stored at room temperature (25°C, 77°F); avoid exposure to heat. After mixing, the PegIntron solution should be used immediately but may be stored in the refrigerator up to 24 hours. The solution contains no preservatives. DO NOT FREEZE.

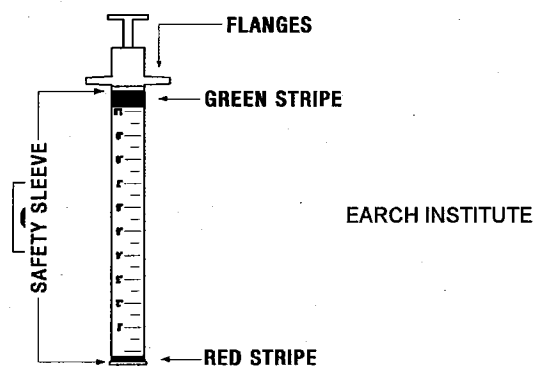
Preparing the PegIntron solution

- Find a clean, well-lit, non-slip flat working surface and assemble all of the supplies you will need for an injection. All of the supplies you will need for an injection are in the PegIntron Powder for Injection package. The package contains:
 - a vial of PegIntron powder
 - a 1.25 mL vial of DILUENT
 - 2 disposable syringes, and
 - alcohol swabs
- Check the date printed on the PegIntron carton to make sure that the expiration date has not passed. Remove one vial and look at the contents. The PegIntron in the vial should appear as a white to off-white tablet-like solid, that is whole/in pieces or as a loose powder.

If you have already mixed the PegIntron solution and it has been stored properly in the refrigerator, take it out of the refrigerator and allow the solution to come to room temperature.

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, rinse and towel dry. It is important to keep your work area, your hands and injection site clean to minimize the risk of infection.

The disposable syringes have needles that are already attached and cannot be removed. Each syringe has a clear plastic safety sleeve that is pulled over the needle for disposal after use. The safety sleeve should remain tight against the flange while using the syringe and moved over the needle only when ready for disposal. **Figure A.** The syringes and needles are for single use only.



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Figure A

4. Remove the protective wrapper from ONE of the syringes provided and use for the following steps 5-7. Make sure that the syringe safety sleeve is sitting against the flange. (see **Figure A**).

5. Remove the protective plastic cap from the tops of both the supplied DILUENT and the PegIntron vials. Clean the rubber stopper on the top of both vials with an alcohol swab.

6. Carefully remove the protective cap straight off of the needle to avoid damaging the needle point. Fill the syringe with air by pulling the plunger to 0.7 mL (**Figure B**). Hold the DILUENT vial upright. Do not touch the cleaned top of the vial with your hands. (**Figure C**). Insert the needle through the center of the rubber stopper of the DILUENT vial, and inject the air from the syringe into the vial (**Figure D**). Turn the vial upside down and make sure the tip of the needle is in the liquid. **Withdraw only 0.7 mL of DILUENT** by pulling the plunger back to 0.7 mL mark on the side of the syringe. (**Figure E**). Remove the needle from the vial (**Figure F**). **Discard the remaining DILUENT.**

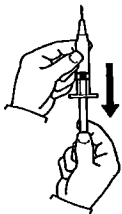


Figure B

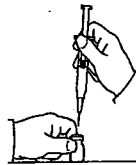


Figure C

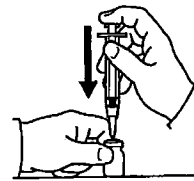


Figure D

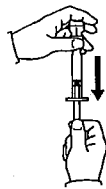


Figure E

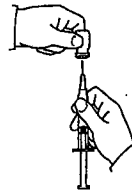


Figure F

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7. Insert the needle through the center of the rubber stopper of the PegIntron vial, and place the needle tip against the glass wall of the vial (**Figure G**). SLOWLY inject the 0.7 mL DILUENT so that the stream of DILUENT runs down the side of the vial. To prevent bubbles from forming, DO NOT AIM THE STREAM of diluent directly on the tablet-like SOLID or POWDER in the bottom of the vial. Remove the needle from the vial.



358 Firmly grasp the safety sleeve and pull it over the exposed needle until you hear a click.
 359 The green stripe on the safety sleeve will completely cover the red stripe on the needle.
 360 (See **Figure O** in the section: "Injecting the PegIntron dose.") Discard the syringe and
 361 needle in the puncture proof container.
 362

363 8. GENTLY swirl the vial in a gentle circular motion (**Figure H**), until the PegIntron is
 364 completely dissolved. **DO NOT SHAKE** the vial. If any powder remains undissolved in
 365 the vial, gently turn the vial upside down until all of the powder is dissolved. It is not
 366 unusual for the solution to appear cloudy or bubbly for a few minutes. If air bubbles do
 367 form, wait until the solution has settled and all bubbles have risen to the top before
 368 withdrawing your dose from the vial.
 369

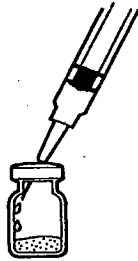


Figure G



Figure H

380
381 9. After the solution has settled and is completely dissolved it should be clear, colorless and
 382 without particles, but there may be a ring of foam or bubbles on the surface, this is
 383 normal. Do not use it if you see particles or the color is not correct.
 384 10. After the PegIntron powder is dissolved but before you withdraw your dose, clean the
 385 rubber stopper again with an alcohol swab.
 386

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390
391 11. Unwrap the second syringe provided. You will use it to give yourself the injection.
 392 Carefully remove the protective cap from the needle and fill the syringe with air by pulling
 393 the plunger to the number on the side of the syringe (mL) that corresponds to your
 394 prescribed dose (**Figure J**). Hold the PegIntron vial upright. **DO NOT** touch the cleaned
 395 top of the vial with your hands (**Figure K**). Insert the needle into the vial containing the
 396 PegIntron solution and inject the air into the center of the vial. (**Figure L**).
 397

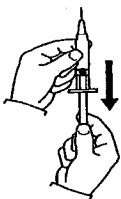


Figure J

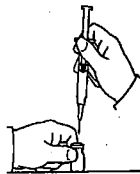


Figure K

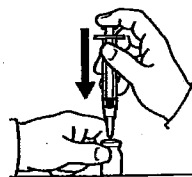
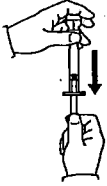


Figure L

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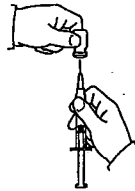


402
 403 12. Turn the PegIntron vial upside down. Be sure the tip of needle is in the PegIntron
 404 solution. While holding the vial and syringe with one hand slowly pull the plunger back to
 405 withdraw the exact amount of PegIntron into the syringe your health care provider told you
 406 to use (Figure M).
 407
 408



409
 410 Figure M
 411
 412

413 13. Remove the needle from the vial (Figure N) and check for air bubbles in the syringe.
 414 If you see any bubbles, hold the syringe with the needle pointing up and gently tap the
 415 syringe gently until the bubbles rise. Then push the plunger in slowly until the bubbles
 416 disappear.
 417



418 Figure N
 419
 420

421 **Injecting the PegIntron Dose**

422 **Selecting the Site for Injection.**

423 The best sites for giving yourself an injection are those areas with a layer of fat between
 424 the skin and muscle, like your thigh, the outer surface of your upper arm, and abdomen.
 425 Do not inject yourself in the area near your navel or waistline. If you are very thin, you
 426 should only use the thigh or outer surface of the arm for injection.
 427

428 You should use a different site each time you inject PegIntron to avoid soreness at any one
 429 site. Do not inject PegIntron solution into an area where the skin is irritated, red, bruised,
 430 infected or has scars, stretch marks or lumps.
 431

432 14. Clean the skin where the injection is to be given with an alcohol swab, and wait for
 433 the area to dry. Remove the protective cap from the needle. Make sure the safety sleeve of
 434 the syringe is pushed firmly against the syringe flange so that the needle is fully exposed
 435 (see Figure A).
 436

437 15. With one hand, pinch a 2-inch fold of loose skin. With your other hand, pick up the
 438 syringe and hold it like a pencil. Position the bevel of the needle facing up and insert the
 439 needle approximately 1/4 inch into the pinched skin at approximately a 45 to 90 degree

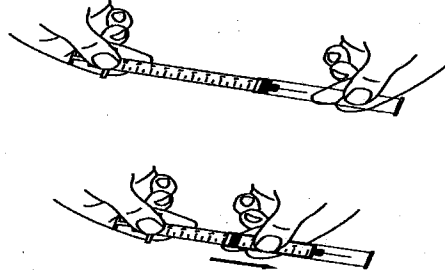


440 angle with a quick dart-like thrust. After the needle is in, remove the hand that you used
441 to pinch your skin and use it to hold the syringe barrel. Pull the plunger of the syringe
442 back very slightly. If blood comes into the syringe, the needle has entered a blood vessel.
443 **Do not inject.** Withdraw the needle and discard the syringe as outlined in step 17. Repeat
444 the above steps with a new vial to prepare a new syringe and inject the medicine at a new
445 site. If no blood is present in the syringe, inject the medicine by gently pressing the
446 plunger all the way down the syringe barrel.

447
448 16. Hold an alcohol swab near the needle and pull the needle straight out of the skin.
449 Press the alcohol swab over the injection site for several seconds. Do not massage the
450 injection site. If there is bleeding, cover it with a bandage.
451



452 17. After injecting your dose, firmly grasp the safety sleeve and pull it over the exposed
453 needle until you hear a click, and the green stripe on the safety sleeve covers the red stripe
454 on the needle (**Figure O**). Discard the syringe and needle in the Sharp's container
455 supplied to you.



466 **Figure O**

467 18. After 2 hours, check the injection site for redness, swelling, or tenderness. If you
468 have a skin reaction and it doesn't clear up in a few days, contact your health care provider
469 or nurse.

470
471 **How do I dispose of the used syringes and needles?**

472 Discard used safety lock syringes and needles in a Sharp's container or other puncture
473 proof container like a coffee can. **DO NOT USE** glass or clear plastic containers. Your
474 health care provider or nurse will tell you how to dispose a full container. Always keep
475 the container out of reach of children.

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