



Adalimumab “Humira”

Adalimumab “Humira”

What is Humira? Humira is a recombinant monoclonal antibody administered by subcutaneous injection. It works by blocking the activity of TNF , a molecule crucial to the immune response and inflammation. Humira has been FDA approved for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis. Overall Humira is an effective treatment for severe psoriasis, although there are many potential side effects that one needs to be aware of.

What are the potential side effects of Humira? The following are the major side effects of Humira. For a thorough discussion of potential side effects and adverse events, please refer to the package insert or the Humira website: <http://www.humira.com>

Injection site reactions: This is quite common with Humira. This is NOT dangerous and tends to resolve over time.

Serious infections: Since Humira suppresses the immune system, there is an increased risk of systemic infections, including but not limited to tuberculosis, pneumonia, upper respiratory viral infections, and infections in the blood which can lead to death.

Cancers: there are case reports of patients developing lymphoma, leukemia, and skin cancers when using Humira.

Multiple sclerosis: Rare reports have linked Humira to the development of multiple sclerosis. It is preferable to avoid Humira if one has multiple sclerosis or family history of multiple sclerosis.

Lupus: Reports have linked Humira to increased autoantibody titer and development of systemic lupus erythematosus, an autoimmune disease.

Congestive heart failure: Progression and development of congestive heart failure were linked to Humira use, but most patients will experience an improvement or disappearance of the CHF after therapy is stopped. Rarely, CHF has resulted in death.

Bone marrow suppression: There have been rare reports of aplastic anemia, pancytopenia, and even death associated with Humira.

Humira belongs to a new class of medication. It is possible that with time, more side effects will be uncovered. The risks and benefits of the Humira need to be weighed on an individual basis before deciding to take this medication.