

Patient Treatment Information

Lenalidomide

Your treatment is called lenalidomide (len-a-LID-oh-mide) or Revlimid (REV-li-mid). It is commonly used to treat multiple myeloma and myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS). It has also been used to treat other diseases. It is not known exactly how lenalidomide works, but it is thought to stop the growth of abnormal cells found in the bone marrow and allows the normal cells to perform their functions.

What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Treatment?

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any prescription or over-the-counter products you are taking, including dietary supplements, vitamins, herbal medicines and homeopathic remedies.

Avoid breastfeeding during treatment. It is not known if this drug passes into breast milk.

Some drugs can cause sterility. Talk with your healthcare provider about your options if you want to have children in the future.

Do not get any immunizations or vaccinations while taking chemotherapy drugs without the approval of your healthcare provider.

What Do I Need to Know Before Starting Lenalidomide?

Lenalidomide may cause severe fetal harm, including life-threatening birth defects. Even one single dose taken by a pregnant woman can cause severe birth defects in a fetus. When taking this medication, women should not have sexual intercourse OR should use at least two forms of effective birth control for at least one month before beginning lenalidomide, during lenalidomide therapy, and for one month after stopping lenalidomide. In addition, women who could become pregnant (women who have not undergone a hysterectomy and who have had a period in the last 24 months) and are being treated with lenalidomide should have two pregnancy tests done: one 10-14 days prior to starting and another test done 24 hours before starting lenalidomide and regularly while on lenalidomide therapy to make sure they are not pregnant. Men who are taking lenalidomide therapy should always use a latex condom during any sexual contact (even those who have had a vasectomy). If you or your partner misses a period, has abnormal menstrual bleeding, or becomes pregnant while on lenalidomide therapy, stop taking the medication and contact your doctor or healthcare provider right away.

Lenalidomide may temporarily reduce the number of platelets in your blood, which can increase your risk of bleeding. If your platelets become too low, your healthcare provider may delay your treatment or recommend a platelet transfusion.

Lenalidomide may temporarily reduce the number of white blood cells in your blood, which can increase your risk of infection. If your white blood cells become too low, your healthcare provider may delay your treatment or give you medicine to increase the number of white cells in your blood.

Lenalidomide can increase the risk of blood clots, in your legs or lungs. Call your healthcare provider immediately if you develop pain or swelling in your legs or if you have sudden shortness of breath and/or chest pain.

You should not donate blood while you are taking lenalidomide.

If you are a male, you should not donate sperm while taking lenalidomide.

Your treatment can interact with other substances, including:

- Digoxin

You should **not** take this treatment if you are pregnant or are at risk of becoming pregnant; or if you are allergic to lenalidomide or any of its components.

How Is the Treatment Given?

The dose of lenalidomide will vary with your diagnosis. Most people take lenalidomide once a day. Lenalidomide should be taken with water. If you miss a dose, skip it and take the next dose as scheduled. Do not take two doses of lenalidomide to catch up. In addition, do not break, open or chew your capsules.

It is important to take lenalidomide exactly as prescribed. Do not stop the medicine or change the dose without talking with your healthcare provider.

Store lenalidomide at room temperature away from children and pets. If you take too much lenalidomide, contact your healthcare provider, local poison control center or emergency room right away.

What Are the Important Side Effects?

All drugs can cause side effects, but every person reacts differently to each drug. The following chart lists important side effects that can occur with your treatment, how often the side effect occurs (common, less common or rare), how to recognize and minimize side effects and possible treatments. Call your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about side effects.

Potential Side Effects	How to Minimize Side Effects	Possible Treatments
Nausea/Vomiting (Common) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling queasy or sick to your stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast. Eat food cold or at room temperature so the smell of food will not bother you. Avoid fried, spicy or fatty foods. Eat and drink slowly. Drink plenty of liquids during the day, but to avoid bloating, do not drink during meals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be given medicine to help reduce nausea and vomiting.
Constipation (Common) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in passing stools Decrease in the normal frequency of bowel movements Small, hard dry stools Bloating, gas, cramps and pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drink plenty of fluids to help loosen your bowels. Drink warm or hot liquids if you do not have mouth sores. Your healthcare provider may suggest eating foods that are high in fiber, such as bran, vegetables, whole wheat breads and fruit. Add prunes or prune juice, which act like laxatives. Exercise can help loosen bowels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your healthcare provider may recommend a stool softener.
Infection (Common) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever and chills Painful urination Sore throat and cough Nasal congestion Swelling or redness of the skin at the site of a wound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash your hands often. Brush and floss your teeth daily. Clean cuts right away with warm water, soap and antiseptic. When your white blood cell count is low, stay away from crowds and people with colds or other illnesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be given medicine to increase your white blood cell count. You may be given an antibiotic to treat or prevent infection. Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.
Anemia (Common) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue or weakness Dizziness Pale skin Feeling out of breath Feeling cold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan rest periods throughout the day. Organize daily activities so that you conserve your energy. Try to eat a well balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids. Stand up slowly to avoid getting dizzy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be given medicine to increase your red blood cell count. Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.

Potential Side Effects	How to Minimize Side Effects	Possible Treatments
<p>Bleeding (Common)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual bleeding, easy bruising • Black or tar-like stools • Blood in your urine • Pinpoint red spots on your skin • Bleeding gums or nosebleeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid aspirin and aspirin-like drugs, such as ibuprofen. • Use caution with sharp objects, such as razors and nail cutters. • Avoid activities that can cause cuts, bumps and bruises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be given medicine to increase your platelet count. • Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.
<p>Diarrhea (Common)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose or watery stools several times a day • Abdominal cramping, gas and bloating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat small, frequent meals and bland foods—such as bananas, rice, applesauce and toast. • Avoid caffeine; alcohol; raw fruits and vegetables; raw eggs; undercooked meats; spicy, fatty and greasy foods; milk and dairy products; foods that cause gas, such as beans and other legumes; high fiber and high-fat foods; foods left unrefrigerated for more than two hours (one hour for egg dishes and cream or mayonnaise-based foods); bulk laxatives; and stool softeners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink eight to ten glasses of clear liquids every day. • Your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine to help treat diarrhea.
<p>Anorexia or Appetite Loss (Less Common)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having an appetite • Feeling too nauseous to eat • Metallic or medicinal taste • Change in taste causing dislike for certain foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try eating six to eight small meals or snacks each day instead of three larger meals. • Vary your diet and try new foods and recipes. • Take a walk before meals, when possible. This may make you feel hungrier. • Eat with friends or family. When eating alone, listen to the radio or watch TV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook dinners ahead of time and freeze them in small portions so that cooking smells are minimized. • Let others help with food, but ask that foods be prepared in small portions that can be frozen. And don't hesitate to let them know which foods to avoid. • Add mild spices to change flavor. • It might be helpful to have a program, such as Meals on Wheels, deliver food to you.
<p>Neuropathy (Rare)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbness or tingling feeling in the hands or feet • Muscle cramps • Loss of balance • Difficulty buttoning buttons or picking up objects • Decreased awareness of heat or cold in fingertips and toes • Difficulty hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to avoid the cold or extreme heat. • Wear mittens or gloves, socks and scarves. • If your fingers are numb, be careful with sharp objects. • Beware of hot coffee mugs, pots and pans and dishwater—you may not feel the heat until you are burned. • If you feel unsteady, be careful on stairs and in the shower. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your healthcare provider may decrease your chemotherapy dose or delay further chemotherapy.

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