

understanding your medications

Multiple Sclerosis

Getting a diagnosis can be overwhelming, especially if you need complicated care. Along with good nutrition, taking your prescribed medication as directed is an important part of a successful treatment plan. The Meijer Specialty Pharmacy care team is here for you every step of the way. **Our pharmacists are available 24/7 to answer questions and to help you get the most out of your medication.**

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, autoimmune condition. Autoimmune conditions happen when your immune system mistakenly attacks some of your own cells, causing damage. In MS, this attack happens in the brain, spinal cord and nerves that control your eyes (all-together, these three things make up your central nervous system). The most important part of MS treatment is taking a certain type of medication (sometimes called “disease-modifying therapies”) that target the cells that are wrongly attacking your body to lessen that attack.

| Medicaton Name | How Med Is Given | Common Side Effects | Ways To Lessen Side Effects |
|---|------------------------|---|---|
| Aubagio® (teriflunomide) | Taken by mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back pain • Diarrhea • Dizziness • Elevated liver enzymes • Birth defects • Fatigue • Infection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn’t causing any liver problems. • Do not attempt to become pregnant while taking this medication. If you are considering becoming pregnant, talk to your doctor right away – you will need to switch medications as soon as possible. • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that’s right for you. • Take your time getting up from laying down or from a long period of sitting. Move slowly and let your body adjust as you rise – this will help keep you from getting overly dizzy. |
| Avonex® Rebif® (interferon beta-1a) | Injected into the skin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or redness at the injection site • Headache • Fatigue • Depression • Muscle aches • Nausea | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don’t inject into the same area over and over again • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that’s right for you. • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. • Tell a friend or family member that you are taking this medication, and to look out for any changes in your mood that you yourself may not notice. • Let your doctor or pharmacist know right away if you notice any changes in your mood or any new feelings of sadness or depression. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. |

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|---|------------------------|---|---|
| <p>Betaseron[®] Extavia[®] (interferon beta-1b)</p> | Injected into the skin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in white blood cells • Pain or redness at the injection site • Headache • Depression • Muscle aches • Fatigue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any blood problems. • Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don't inject into the same area over and over again • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you. • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. • Tell a friend or family member that you are taking this medication, and to look out for any changes in your mood that you yourself may not notice. • Let your doctor or pharmacist know right away if you notice any changes in your mood or any new feelings of sadness or depression. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. |
| <p>Copaxone[®] Glatopa[®] (glatiramer acetate)</p> | Injected into the skin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or redness at the injection site • Infection • Nausea | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don't inject into the same area over and over again • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. |
| <p>Gilenya[®] (fingolimod)</p> | Taken by mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection • Headache • Nausea/diarrhea • Elevated liver enzymes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any liver problems. • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you. |
| <p>Lemtrada[®] (alemtuzumab)</p> | Infused through an IV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in certain blood cells • Infusion-related reactions • Infection • Headache | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any blood cell problems. • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Make sure to follow all instructions from your infusion center about preparing for your infusion. You may be instructed to take some medication right before your appointment to help reduce infusion-related reactions. • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you. |

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| Novantrone (mitoxantrone) | Infused through an IV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection • Nausea • Decrease in certain blood cells • Nausea/vomiting • Fatigue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any blood cell problems. • Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need to feel your best. |
| Ocrevus® (ocrelizumab) | Infused through an IV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection • Infusion-related reactions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Make sure to follow all instructions from your infusion center about preparing for your infusion. You may be instructed to take some medication right before your appointment to help reduce infusion-related reactions. |
| Plegridy® (peginterferon beta-1a) | Injected into the skin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle and/or joint pain • Headache • Pain or redness at the injection site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you. • Make sure to inject yourself in a different spot each time – don't inject into the same area over and over again. |
| Tecfidera® (dimethyl fumarate) | Taken by mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea/diarrhea • Flushing • Decrease in white blood cells | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. • Taking your medication with a meal may help decrease flushing. • Make sure to keep all of your appointments for lab tests – these will check to make sure that the medication isn't causing any blood cell problems. |
| Tysabri® (natalizumab) | Infused through an IV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle or joint pain • Depression • Fatigue • Nausea/diarrhea • Infection • Infusion-related reactions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to help choose an over-the-counter pain reliever that's right for you. • Tell a friend or family member that you are taking this medication, and to look out for any changes in your mood that you yourself may not notice. • Let your doctor or pharmacist know right away if you notice any changes in your mood or any new feelings of sadness or depression. • Eating small, frequent meals throughout the day can help limit nausea and stomach upset. • Practice good hygiene: make sure to wash your hands often, and stay away from others who are sick. Make sure to see your doctor right away if you think you might be sick. • Make sure to follow all instructions from your infusion center about preparing for your infusion. You may be instructed to take some medication right before your appointment to help reduce infusion-related reactions. |