

# **Peginterferon alfa-2**

*peg-in-ter-FEER-on*

**Brand Name: Pegasys (2a), PEG-Intron (2b)**

Peginterferon alfa-2 belongs to a class of medicines known as antivirals. This drug also belongs to a class called biological response modifiers. Antivirals kill viruses or stop viruses from multiplying. Biological response modifiers stimulate the body's response to infection and disease.

Peginterferon alfa-2a, also known as Pegasys, and peginterferon alfa-2b, also known as PEG-Intron, are approved by the FDA for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C (HCV) infection, a common infection in HIV patients. It is usually prescribed in combination with ribavirin, another antiviral.

## **HIV/AIDS-Related Uses**

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Peginterferon alfa is used to treat chronic HCV in patients coinfecting with HIV and HCV.

## **Dosage Information**

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Peginterferons alfa-2a and alfa-2b are given by injection under the skin.

## **Contraindications**

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Individuals should tell a doctor about any medical problems before taking peginterferon alfa.

## **Possible Side Effects**

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Along with its desired effects, peginterferon alfa may cause some serious unwanted effects. Some side effects that may need a doctor's attention include anxiety; depression; mood swings; fever; continuing abdominal pain; bloody diarrhea; viral infection; trouble sleeping; irritability; chills, cough, or hoarseness; lower back or side pain; painful or difficult urination; nausea or vomiting; black, tarry stools; blood in urine or stools; pinpoint red spots on skin; or unusual bleeding or bruising. Individuals should tell a doctor if they have symptoms of any of these side effects.

Other side effects may not be serious and may lessen or disappear with continued use. These include abdominal pain; hair loss; loss of appetite; cough; diarrhea; dizziness; dry skin; indigestion; fatigue; chills, headache, pain in joints or muscles, runny nose, sneezing, or sore throat; flushing of skin; bruising, irritation, or itching at the injection site; general ill feeling; muscle or joint pain; nausea; aching, fullness, or tension in area of affected sinus; skin rash or itching, increased sweating; vomiting; and weight loss. Individuals should tell a doctor if these side effects continue or

are bothersome.

## **Drug and Food Interactions**

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A doctor should be notified of any other medications being taken, including prescription, nonprescription (over-the-counter), or herbal medications.

## **Clinical Trials**

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For information on clinical trials that involve Peginterferon alfa-2, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Peginterferon alfa-2 AND HIV Infections.

## **Manufacturer Information**

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Peginterferon alfa-2  
Schering - Plough Corp  
2000 Galloping Hill Rd  
Kenilworth, NJ 07033-0530  
(800) 526-4099

Peginterferon alfa-2  
Roche Laboratories  
340 Kingsland Street  
Nutley, NJ 07110  
(973) 235-5000

Pegasys (2a)  
Roche Laboratories  
340 Kingsland Street  
Nutley, NJ 07110  
(973) 235-5000

# ***Peginterferon alfa-2***



## **Manufacturer Information (cont.)**

PEG-Intron (2b)  
Schering - Plough Corp  
2000 Galloping Hill Rd  
Kenilworth, NJ 07033-0530  
(800) 526-4099

## **For More Information**

Contact your doctor or an AIDSinfo Health Information Specialist:

- Via Phone: 1-800-448-0440 Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 5:00 p.m. ET
- Via Live Help: [http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live\\_help](http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live_help) Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET