

# Altebrel

Package leaflet: Information for the patient

**Altebrel 25 mg solution for injection in pre-filled syringe**

**Altebrel 50 mg solution for injection in pre-filled syringe**

**Etanercept**

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start using this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- ◆ Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- ◆ If you have any further questions, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.
- ◆ This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- ◆ If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

## What is in this leaflet?

- 1. What Altebrel is and what it is used for
- 2. What you need to know before you use Altebrel
- 3. How to use Altebrel
- 4. Possible side effects
- 5. How to store Altebrel
- 6. Contents of the pack and other information

Instructions for preparing and giving an injection of Altebrel (See overleaf)

## 1- What Altebrel is and what it is used for

Altebrel contains the active substance called Etanercept with protein structure. Altebrel belongs to a group of medicines called Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) Blocking Agent. Altebrel produced by recombinant DNA technology in a Chinese Hamster Ovary (CHO), mammalian expression system.

People with autoimmune diseases have excess amount of TNF- $\alpha$  in their bodies which can cause inflammation and lead to painful, swollen joints and dry, itchy, red, scaly patches (psoriatic skin lesions) anywhere on the body. This medicine blocks the activity of TNF- $\alpha$  and prevents TNF- $\alpha$  interactions with its cell surface receptor and as a result, helps to improve inflammation process in your body.

**Rheumatoid Arthritis:** an inflammatory disease of joints. Altebrel is indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe Rheumatoid Arthritis in adults. If you do not respond well enough to other medicines, you will be given Altebrel in combination with Methotrexate. If Methotrexate is not appropriate for the patient. Altebrel will be prescribed alone.

Altebrel may be effective in reducing signs and symptoms of disease such as pain, morning stiffness, it may also improve your daily activities and may help to slow down the damage in your joints and bones.

**Psoriatic Arthritis:** an inflammatory disease of joints with inflammation, itchy, red and scaly patches of skin that affects both the joints and the skin. In adult patients with multiple joint involvement, this medicine can improve joint function and reduce signs and symptoms of the disease. Also it could slow down the damage in joints and bones. Altebrel may be effective in clearing skin and improving quality of life such as personal relationships, work and daily activities.

**Axial spondyloarthritis (Ankylosing spondylitis and Non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis):** an inflammatory disease of the spine. If you have an active Ankylosing Spondylitis with inadequate response to other medicines, Altebrel will be described.

**Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis:** If the response to Methotrexate is not well enough or the treatment is not appropriate, Altebrel will be prescribed in the following types of juvenile idiopathic arthritis. Polyarthritis (rheumatoid factor positive or negative) and extended oligoarthritis in patients from the age of 2 years. Psoriatic arthritis in patients from the age of 12 years.

**Enthesitis-related arthritis:** In patients from the age of 12 years with inadequate response to other medicines.

**Plaque psoriasis:** an auto immune disease accompanied by inflammatory lesions in skin. In patients with severe disease and inadequate response to other medicines from the age of 6 years who are candidate for systemic or photo therapy, Altebrel will be prescribed.

## Time need to observe the effect of Altebrel:

According to clinical studies, it is expected that Altebrel will be effective in adults and children, three months after the first injection and maintained with continued treatment.

## 2- What you need to know before you use Altebrel?

### Do not use Altebrel:

- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to Etanercept or any of the other ingredients of this medicine. (Listed in section 6)
- If you have an infection that has spread through your body (sepsis).
- If you have an active infections, including chronic or localized infections.

### Appropriate precautions for use; special warnings

#### Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse before using Altebrel:

- If you have had allergic reactions to Altebrel like shortness of breath, wheezing and swollen face and lips avoid injection of the next dose and tell your doctor immediately.
- If you develop a new infection, this could put you at high risk for serious side effects from Altebrel. If you notice symptoms of an infection such as fever, sweats or chills, cough or flu-like symptoms, shortness of breath, blood in your phlegm, weight loss, muscle aches, stomach pain, red and warm or painful areas on your skin, diarrhea, feeling very tired and burning when you urinate or urinate more often than normal contact your physician immediately to monitor the treatment with Altebrel.
- If you have had any recurrent infection in past or other conditions such as HIV, diabetes and weak immune system that might increase the risk of infections inform your doctor.
- If you had tuberculosis (TB) or have been in close contact with someone who has or had TB. Also if you were born, lived or traveled to countries where there is a high risk for getting TB, You will need to be evaluated for TB. Your doctor should test you for TB before starting Altebrel and should monitor you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during your treatment with Altebrel even if you have tested negative for TB.
- If you were born, traveled or lived in areas where there is a greater risk for certain kinds of fungal infections (histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis and blastomycosis), these infections may develop or become more severe by taking Altebrel. If you are not sure about the incidence of these infections in your living areas, ask your doctor.
- If you are a carrier of or if you have a history of Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C also alcoholic related hepatitis tell your doctor. You need to be tested for Hepatitis before starting Altebrel.
- If you have or have had persistent numbness, tingling and muscle weakness or a disease such as multiple sclerosis, Guillain-Barré or Guillain-Barré-like syndrome which can cause inflammation of the nervous system inform your doctor.
- If you have been treated for congestive heart failure inform your doctor, in this condition Altebrel must be used with caution.
- If you are scheduled to have a surgery in future consult with your doctor.
- If you have been in close contact with someone with varicella zoster tell your doctor.
- If you have or have ever had lymphoma (a blood cancer) or any other cancer before you are given Altebrel, tell your doctor.
- If you have developed any changes in your skin appearance tell your doctor.
- If you are taking Altebrel, you should not receive live vaccines. If vaccination is necessary consult with your doctor.
- If you have diabetes or using anti-diabetic medicines tell your doctor to decide if you need less anti-diabetic medicine during Altebrel therapy.

## Use in children and adolescents

- Do not give Altebrel to children with polyarthritis or extended oligoarthritis below the age of 2 years, or in children with enthesitis-related arthritis or psoriatic arthritis below the age of 12 years, or in children with psoriasis below the age of 6 years.
- Before starting Altebrel, children should receive recommended vaccinations. While taking Altebrel live vaccines, such as polio vaccine, should not be received. If you received vaccine or you planned to receive vaccine during your therapy, tell your doctor straight away.
- Risk of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) may be increased in children with Altebrel injection, if your child develops new signs of diarrhea, abdominal cramp, weight loss and blood in stool tell the doctor.

## Other medicines and Altebrel

- Tell your doctor about any other medicines you are taking for other conditions such as high blood pressure, herbal medicines, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and supplements.
- If you have diabetes, your doctor may decide you need less anti-diabetic medicine while taking Altebrel.
- Taking Altebrel with Anakinra and Abatacept is not recommended because this may increase your risk of getting a serious infection.
- Etanercept together with cyclophosphamide may increase the risk of solid cancers.

## Pregnancy and breast-feeding

- Altebrel has not been studied in pregnant women or nursing mothers, therefore its effect on pregnant women or nursing babies are not known and the usage is not recommended.
- If you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant or are planning to be pregnant ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse for advice before taking this medicine.
- If you received Altebrel during your pregnancy, the baby may have a higher risk for getting an infection. Tell the baby's doctors and other healthcare professionals about the use of Altebrel during pregnancy before the baby receives any vaccine.
- Altebrel can pass into breast milk. You should not breast-feed during treatment. Your doctor should decide if you will take Altebrel or breast-feed.

## Effects on the ability to drive or to use machines

There is no study to show Altebrel may affect on the ability to drive or use machines.

## 3-How to use Altebrel

Always use this medicine exactly as your doctor or pharmacist has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

## Use in adults

If you have Rheumatoid Arthritis, Psoriatic Arthritis or Axial spondyloarthritis the recommended dose is 50 mg weekly subcutaneously. Using the 50 mg single use pre-filled syringe once weekly or 25 mg single use pre-filled syringe twice weekly. Your doctor will tell you whether the two injections with the 25 mg single use pre-filled syringe should be given on the same day once a week or on two different days (3 or 4 days apart) in the same week.

If you have Plaque Psoriasis, the recommended initial dose of Altebrel is a 50 mg dose twice a week (3 or 4 days apart) for 3 months. After 3 months your doctor will tell you to reduce your dose to 50 mg once per week. Using the 50 mg single use pre-filled syringe once weekly or 25 mg single use pre-filled syringe twice weekly.

## Use in children and adolescents

The recommended dose for children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis is based on child's body weight. Doctor will tell the correct dose of Altebrel for your child.

For polyarthritis or extended oligoarthritis in patients from the age of 2 years, or enthesitis-related arthritis or psoriatic arthritis in patients from the age of 12 years, the recommended dose is 0.4 mg of Altebrel per kg bodyweight (up to a maximum of 25 mg) given twice weekly, or 0.8 mg of Altebrel per kg of bodyweight (up to a maximum of 50 mg) given once weekly.

For psoriasis in patients from the age of 6 years, the usual dose is 0.8 mg of Altebrel per kg bodyweight (up to a maximum of 50 mg), and should be given once weekly. If Altebrel has no effect on the child's condition after 12 weeks, your doctor may tell you to stop using this medicine.

## Method and route of administration

Altebrel is administered by subcutaneous injection. Altebrel injection can be done before or after your meal.

## If you take more Altebrel than you should

If you accidentally injected Altebrel more than the usual doses, immediately contact your doctor or pharmacist.

## If you forget to take Altebrel

If you forget to inject Altebrel on your planned date, inject the forgotten dose as soon as you remember. Unless the next planned dose is the next day. In this case skip the missed dose and continue your treatment according to your previous plan.

Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose. For further information consult with your doctor.

## If you stop using Altebrel

After discontinuation of taking your medicine, the symptoms of your disease may return. Never stop using your medicine before consulting your physician. In order to take the complete benefit from your medicine, always complete the treatment course recommended by your doctor.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

## 4- Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

### Serious side effects:

If you notice any of these rare serious side effects immediately seek for medical advice.

**Allergic reactions:** Some patients may have allergic reactions to Altebrel. If you develop a severe rash, swollen face or difficulty breathing while taking Altebrel, seek for urgent medical advice and immediately go to the nearest hospital.

**Serious infections:** The probability of developing latent serious infections including Tuberculosis (TB), bacterial, fungal and viral infections may be increased by taking Altebrel or other TNF- $\alpha$  inhibitors. In very rare cases, hepatitis B recurred in patients with previous history of hepatitis. Signs of serious infections include high fever accompanied with cough, chills, weakness and red painful sore on joint or skin.

**Blood problems:** In some cases taking Altebrel leads to decrease in production of blood cells involved in immune system function and clotting. This could be life-threatening. If you develop a frequent and persistent fever, feeling weak and pale or have bruises or bleeding call your doctor right away. Your doctor may decide to stop Altebrel.

**Heart problems:** You should tell your doctor if you have ever been treated for heart failure. Your doctor may choose not to start Altebrel treatment for you, or may need to monitor you closely. Symptoms include shortness of breath with activity, swelling in your hand and foot, cough and night time shortness of breath or bluish color of nail and lips which may be the symptoms of worsening of heart failure.

**Malignancies:** Patients with autoimmune and inflammatory diseases including Rheumatoid Arthritis, Psoriatic Arthritis, Plaque Psoriasis or Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis particularly those with highly active disease, may be at higher risk for lymphoma (a type of blood cancer). For children and adults taking TNF- $\alpha$

blocker medicines including Altebrel, the chances of getting lymphoma or other cancers, including unusual types, may increase. Signs of cancer may include weight loss, fever, swelling (with or without pain), persistent cough and presence of lumps or growths on the skin.

**Autoimmune reactions:** signs such as pain, itching, weakness and abnormal breathing, thinking, sensation or vision.

**Lupus or lupus-like syndrome:** Some people have also had symptoms that resemble Lupus including skin rashes, weight changes, fever, weakness and joint and muscle pain that may go away by stopping taking Altebrel.

**Nervous system disease:** There have been rare cases of disorders that affect the nervous system of people taking Altebrel or other TNF- $\alpha$  blockers, such as seizures, multiple sclerosis and inflammation of the nerves of eyes. Signs including problems in vision, weakness in arms and feet, numbness or tingling throughout body and dizziness.

**Liver problems (autoimmune hepatitis):** Liver problems can happen in patients using Altebrel or other TNF- $\alpha$  blocker medicines. These can lead to liver failure or death. If you have symptoms including tiredness, skin or eyes look yellow, vomiting or loss of appetite and pain on the right side of stomach immediately tell your doctor.

**Inflammation of the blood vessels:** Signs such as pain, fever, redness or warm skin or itching.

These adverse effects are rare but serious and could be life-threatening, if you notice any of the above symptoms, immediately call your doctor or visit the nearest hospital.

The following additional side effects have been observed with Altebrel in groups with decreasing in frequency:

• **Very common:** (may affect more than 1 in 10 people)

Mild injection site reactions including redness, itching, swelling and bruising at the injection site. These adverse effects may improve 3-5 days after the injection. If you have pain and these signs does not go away call your doctor. Infections including colds, sinusitis, bronchitis, urinary tract infections and skin infections.

• **Common:** (may affect up to 1 in 10 people)

Allergic reactions, fever, itching

• **Uncommon:** (may affect up to 1 in 100 people)

Serious infections including pneumonia, deep skin infections, joint infections and blood infection

Low blood platelet count, swelling of the skin and inflammation of blood Vessels (angioedema)

Skin cancer, new developed or worsening Psoriasis

Eye inflammation

• **Rare:** (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people)

Serious allergic reactions

Lymphoma (a type of blood cancer)

Melanoma (a type of skin cancer)

Low platelet, red and white blood cell (neutrophil) count

Nervous system disorders including severe muscle weakness and inflammation of the nerves of the eyes or spinal cord

Tuberculosis

Worsening of congestive heart failure, seizures

Elevated liver enzymes in blood test, autoimmune hepatitis

Skin rash leads to severe blistering and peeling of the skin (Stevens-Johnson)

Immune disorder that can affect the lungs, skin and lymph nodes (sarcoidosis)

Lupus or lupus-like syndrome

• **Very rare:** (may affect up to 1 in 10,000 users)

Bone marrow suppression

Toxic epidermal necrolysis (A potentially Life -threatening severe skin disease)

Peripheral demyelinating events (A nervous system disease)

• **Not known:** (frequency cannot be estimated from the available data)

Excessive activation of white blood cells associated with inflammation (Macrophage Activation Syndrome)

Leukemia (cancer affecting the blood and bone marrow); Merkel cell Carcinoma (a type of skin cancer)

Recurrence of hepatitis B (a liver infection)

Worsening of a condition called dermatomyositis (muscle inflammation and weakness with an accompanying skin rash)

## Side effects in children and adolescents

The side effects and their frequencies seen in children and adolescents are similar to those described above.

## Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet.

You can also report side effects directly via the national reporting system [fda.gov.ir](http://fda.gov.ir). By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

## 5- How to store Altebrel

### Storage conditions

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the pre-filled syringe and outer carton after "EXP". The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Store in a refrigerator (2°C -8°C). Do not freeze.

Keep the pre-filled syringes in the outer carton in order to protect from light. Check the solution in pre-filled syringe. It should be colorless or light yellow and may contain small white particles of protein. If you are not sure about the physical appearance of the solution consult with your pharmacist.

Do not throw away any medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use. These measures will help to protect the environment.

## 6- Contents of the pack and other information

### What Altebrel contains

The active substance is Etanercept. Each pre-filled syringe contains Etanercept with the concentration of 50 mg/mL. Solution for injection filled in syringes as two doses of 25 mg/0.5 mL or 50 mg/1 mL.

Other ingredients are Sucrose, Sodium chloride, L-arginine hydrochloride, Sodium phosphate monobasic dihydrate, Sodium phosphate dibasic dihydrate and Water for Injections.

### What Altebrel looks like and contents of the pack

Altebrel is supplied as a pre-filled syringe containing a clear, colorless or light yellow solution. Each small box contains 4 pre-filled syringes, 8 alcoholic swabs and a patient information leaflet.

## Instructions for preparing and giving an injection of Altebrel:

The following instructions are for preparing and giving a dose of Altebrel using a single-use pre-filled syringe.

### STEP 1: Setting up for an injection

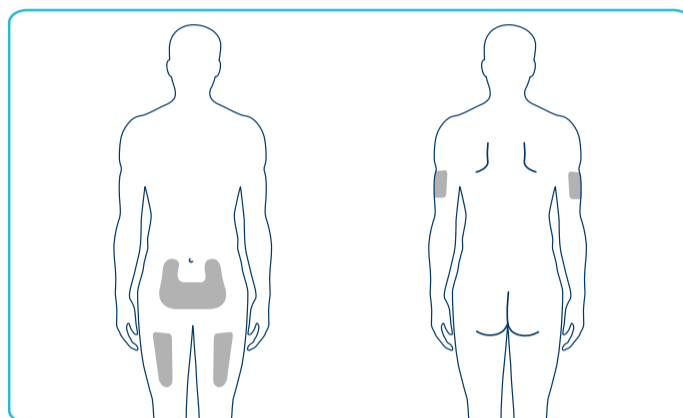
1. Select a clean, well-lit, flat working surface, such as a table.
2. Take the Altebrel carton containing the pre-filled syringes out of the refrigerator and place it on your flat working surface. Remove one pre-filled syringe and place it on your working surface. Do NOT shake the pre-filled syringe of Altebrel. Place the carton containing any remaining pre-filled syringes back into the refrigerator (2°C -8°C).
3. Check the expiration date on the pre-filled syringe.
4. Do NOT use the pre-filled syringe if the needle cover is missing or not securely attached.
5. For a more comfortable injection, allow the Altebrel in the pre-filled

syringe to reach room temperature (approximately 15 to 30 minutes). Do NOT remove the needle cover while allowing it to reach room temperature. Do NOT warm Altebrel in any other way (for example, do NOT warm it in a microwave oven or in hot water).

6. Assemble the additional supplies you will need for your injection. These include an alcohol swab, a cotton ball or gauze and if available, a sharp disposable container.
7. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.
8. Make sure the solution in the pre-filled syringe is clear, colorless or slightly yellow. You may notice small white particles in the solution. These particles are formed from Altebrel and this is acceptable. However, do NOT inject the solution if it is cloudy or discolored, or contains large or colored particles or if the pre-filled syringe appears cracked or broken.

### STEP 2: Choosing and Preparing an Injection Site

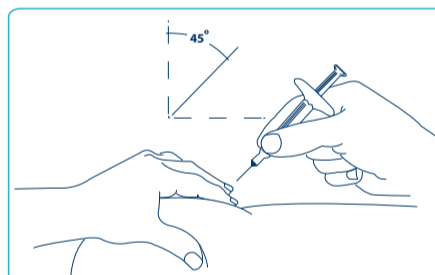
1. Three recommended injection sites for Altebrel using a pre-filled syringe include: (1) the front of the middle thighs; (2) the abdomen, except for the two-inch area right around the navel; and (3) the outer area of the upper arms.
2. Rotate the site for each injection. Make sure that the new injection is given at least one inch from sites of recent injections. Do NOT inject into areas where the skin is tender, bruised, red, or hard. Avoid areas with scars or stretch marks.
3. If you have psoriasis, you should try not to inject directly into any raised, thick, red, or scaly skin patches (psoriasis skin lesions).
4. To prepare the area of skin where Altebrel is to be injected, wipe the injection site with an alcohol swab. Do NOT touch this area again before giving the injection.



### STEP 3: Injecting Altebrel Using a Pre-filled Syringe

Do NOT remove the needle cover from the pre-filled syringe until you are ready to inject.

1. Pick up the pre-filled syringe from your flat working surface. Hold the barrel of the pre-filled syringe with one hand and pull the needle cover straight off. To avoid damaging the needle, do NOT twist or bend the needle cover while you are removing it, and do NOT try to put the needle cover back onto the pre-filled syringe. When you remove the needle cover, there may be a drop of liquid at the end of the needle, this is normal. Do NOT touch the needle or allow it to touch any surface. Do NOT touch or bump the plunger. Doing so could cause the liquid to leak out.
2. Hold the syringe in one hand like a pencil, use the other hand to gently pinch a fold of skin at the cleaned injection site and hold it firmly.
3. Insert the needle at a slight angle (45 to 90 degrees) to the skin with a quick, "dart like" motion.



4. After the needle is inserted, let go of the skin. Slowly push the plunger all the way down to injects Altebrel.
5. When the syringe is empty, remove the needle from the skin, being careful to keep it at the same angle as it was inserted.
6. Press the alcohol swab over the injection site for 10 seconds. If you have severe bleeding cover the injection site with a bandage.

### STEP 4: Disposing of Supplies

1. The syringe should NEVER be reused.
2. Follow any special provincial or local laws regarding the proper disposal of needles and syringes.
3. Used alcohol swabs should be placed in the trash.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

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**Altebrel**

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