

**Remicade is a biologic therapy that is indicated to treat:**

- Moderately to severe active [ulcerative colitis](#) or [Crohn's disease](#)
- [Psoriatic](#) or [Rheumatoid arthritis](#)
- [Ankylosing spondylitis](#)
- [Plaque psoriasis](#)

### **What Is Remicade?**

Remicade (infliximab) is a prescription medication administered for patients via IV infusion. Remicade has been used to treat a variety of complex chronic conditions for over twenty years. Remicade also has several biosimilar formulations, including [Avsola](#), [Inflectra](#), and [Renflexis](#). A biosimilar a biologic therapy that has been approved and licensed by the FDA and has shown to have no clinically meaningful difference from an existing therapy, known as the “reference product.”

NOTE: Due to its cost, certain payors have added Remicade and several of its biosimilars to their Medical Necessity List, indicating that a patient must first fail a series of other therapies before Remicade may be authorized for reimbursement.

### **How Remicade Works**

Remicade works by targeting and blocking the protein tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF-alpha), which, when overproduced by the white blood cells, causes the immune system to attack healthy cells.

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### **What Is Remicade Used For?**

Doctors order infliximab to treat several medical conditions.

### **Remicade treats:**

- Moderately to severe active [ulcerative colitis](#) or [Crohn's disease](#)
  - [Psoriatic](#) or [Rheumatoid arthritis](#)
  - [Ankylosing spondylitis](#)
  - [Plaque psoriasis](#)
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### **Remicade Infusion Dosage and Administration**

Patients receive infliximab intravenously. Treatment time for a Remicade infusion usually lasts from two to three hours.

### **Dosage and Frequency**

Before receiving their first intravenous infusion of infliximab, the ordering physician determines the patient's dose. This dose depends on the patient's weight as well as the severity of the condition for which he or she is receiving treatment.

Patients typically receive their initial dose and return for another treatment two weeks later. After the second dose, patients return in four weeks for their third intravenous infusion of Remicade.

Following the third IV infusion, patients usually return for Remicade IV infusion therapy every six to eight weeks.

### **Administering Remicade via IV Infusion**

1. The nurse prepares the patient's arm by using rubbing alcohol to sterilize the location that is being used to insert the IV needle.
2. Following needle insertion, the IV line is held in place with tape.
3. The nurse attaches the patient's IV line to the line coming down from the bag of medication.

Every half-an-hour, the patient's nurse takes his or her vitals.

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### **Remicade Infusion Side Effects**

As with all medications, [side effects are possible](#).

Acute reactions that can occur during treatment or within 24 hours of Remicade IV infusion therapy include:

- Heart palpitations
- Fever
- Pain in the chest
- Nausea
- Itching
- Sweating
- Flushing
- Blood pressure variations
- Breathing difficulties

Delayed reactions most often occur 24 hours to 14 days following an IV infusion with infliximab. These reactions may include a rash, joint aches, muscle aches, and lethargy.

Rare side effects that can occur during or following a Remicade treatment include:

- A severe infection (e.g., pneumonia, tuberculosis, sepsis)
- Injury to the liver
- Cancers (e.g., lymphoma, skin, cervical)
- Neurologic disease
- Blood disorders
- An allergic reaction to the protein in infliximab

While receiving Remicade, or following a treatment, symptoms can be addressed with the appropriate medication (such as acetaminophen, steroids, antihistamines, or epinephrine). During treatment at a Remicade infusion clinic, reactions generally subside once the rate of infusion slows.

Following treatment, patients need to inform their referring doctor if they develop skin growths, as well as open or painful sores. In addition, the physician needs to know if the patient is experiencing flu-like symptoms or has a poor appetite.

To decrease the likelihood of the patient experiencing another reaction, he or she may be advised to take certain medications before the next IV infusion treatment with infliximab.

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### **How To Prepare for a Remicade Infusion**

It is essential that patients inform their physician if they currently have, or have had, any of the conditions listed below:

- Heart failure
- Tuberculosis
- Cancer
- Serious infections
- Blood problems
- A liver injury
- Hepatitis B
- A nervous system disorder (e.g., multiple sclerosis or seizures)
- Are allergic to any of Remicade's ingredients

Before treatment, patients should get a good night's sleep. In addition, they need to drink an adequate amount of fluid and eat a meal before their Remicade IV infusion.

During treatment with Remicade, patients need to avoid receiving live vaccines.