

Subcutaneous treprostinil (Remodulin)

Subcutaneous (sub-Q) treprostinil is a potent medication to treat pulmonary arterial hypertension, a type of high blood pressure in the lungs that affects heart function. Sub-Q treprostinil works by relaxing the blood vessels in the lungs, which decreases pressure and improves heart function.

How it's administered

Sub-Q treprostinil is delivered as a continuous infusion through a small plastic tube underneath the skin. The tube is attached to a thin line that goes to a syringe in the pump.

The infusion is controlled by a small pump called a CADD MS3. The pump is about the size of a pager. It continuously delivers the medication in small amounts. The pump can fit easily in pants pockets, be clipped to a belt or placed in a fanny pack or purse.

It is critical that this medication remain connected and is continuously delivered. The pump should NEVER be stopped or removed. The pump rate should NEVER be altered.

Infusion pump and alarms

The CADD MS3 pump's alarm will go off if the infusion has been interrupted or the pump malfunctions (both quite rare). The alarms should NEVER be ignored. Parents will discuss with school staff how they would like alarms to be handled. Many patients can solve simple issues such as accidental kinks in tubing. But if a student can't address the issue, they may need you to call emergency services.

Back-up supplies

Since sub-Q treprostinil needs to be delivered continuously, patients must keep a back-up pump, medication vial, syringe, line and battery close to them at all times. These supplies are generally stored in the nurse's office.

Quick Emergency Information

Interruptions or changes in subcutaneous treprostinil delivery can be life threatening.

NEVER manipulate your student's line or pump.

If the student's line/tubing becomes disconnected and can't be reconnected with back-up tubing, call 911.

If the pump's alarm sounds, the student will need to address it immediately.

If the pump stops, and the student experiences chest pain, difficulty breathing, dizziness, fainting or seizures, or appears blue, call 911.

For infusion site failure, insert new sub-Q infusion set and/or replace with back-up pump and syringe cassette. If the sub-Q infusion set can't be replaced, call 911.

Common side effects

Side effects may vary depending upon the patient and dose of sub-Q treprostinil.

- Jaw pain
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Joint/muscle aches
- Flushing
- Loss of appetite Vomiting
- Dizziness Sweating

What to do in an emergency

The most dangerous situation for your student would be the inability to deliver the subcutaneous treprostinil. The student or parent should be able to replace the delivery system if needed. Call 911 if your student complains of or exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Chest pain.
- Difficulty breathing/stops breathing (may require CPR until help arrives).
- Dizziness or lightheadedness.
- Appears blue (lips, fingers etc.).
- Passes out (may require CPR until help arrives).
- Has a seizure (protect the student from the environment; the student may need CPR until help arrives).

If you don't have a phone in your classroom, send another person to the office to get help.

DO NOT leave your student unattended.

After calling 911, call the parent or responsible party immediately.

When emergency help arrives, notify the paramedics of the student's medical condition.