

Nausea and Vomiting

Vomiting

Exenatide also causes gastrointestinal (GI) side effects such as nausea and vomiting. Thus, patients should be properly hydrated and warned when initiating this medication.

Diarrhea

Toilet

A significant percentage of patients taking exenatide experience diarrhea during administration.

Thyroid Cancer

Thigh-droid with Tumor-guy

Exenatide has a black box warning of this medication's use being linked to thyroid cancer. Though this is not well studied, liraglutide, a drug in the same class as exenatide, has been linked to increased thyroid cancer rates.

Pancreatitis

Pancreas-on-fire

Exenatide increases the patient's risk of developing pancreatitis that may lead to pancreatic necrosis, pancreatic hemorrhage, and even death. The medication is contraindicated in patients with a history of pancreatitis. Instruct the patient to look out for symptoms such as severe and persistent abdominal pain and vomiting. Patients diagnosed with pancreatitis should stop taking exenatide.

Renal Failure

Dead Kidney

GI side effects caused by exenatide may decrease the patient's fluid volume and affect the kidneys. Administration of exenatide is contraindicated in patients with severe renal impairment or end-stage renal disease. Teach the patient symptoms of kidney problems including changes in urine color, fatigue, and swelling in the lower extremities.

Considerations

(Give Exenatide) One Hour After Other Medications

(1) Wand Clock with other Med-bottles

Since exenatide delays gastric emptying, the drug should be administered at least one hour after other medications. Exenatide may slow the absorption of oral drugs and cause decreased peak plasma levels. Since contraceptives and antibiotics require high peak concentrations for maximal effectiveness, exenatide prevents proper absorption and should not be administered concurrently. Additionally, SubQ preparation of the medication is injected 1 hour before morning and evening meals; never after the meal.

Adjunct Therapy

Adding-junk

Exenatide is used as adjunct therapy with other antidiabetic drugs. The drug helps improve glucose control in patients taking metformin or a sulfonylureas [refer to the Picmonics on "Metformin (Glucophage)" and "Glyburide & Glipizide (2nd Generation Sulfonylureas)"]. Their difference in mechanism of actions lowers blood sugar more effectively than either drug alone.