

## Uses

Ganciclovir is an anti-viral drug. It is used to prevent disease caused by a virus called cytomegalovirus (CMV) in people who have received organ or bone marrow transplants. CMV disease can lead to serious infections in the body, including an infection in the eye, called CMV retinitis, that can cause blindness.

Ganciclovir is also used to treat people with weakened immune systems (including people with AIDS) who have CMV retinitis. Ganciclovir works by slowing the growth of the CMV virus. It helps control CMV retinitis and decrease the risk of blindness. It also helps prevent the spread of infection to other areas of the body.

Ganciclovir is not a cure for CMV disease. Some people may have worsening CMV retinitis even with treatment. Therefore, it is important to have your eyes checked regularly by your doctor.

## How to use Ganciclovir Sodium Vial

This medication is given by injection into a vein usually over a 1-hour period. Do not give this medication any faster than prescribed because doing so will increase the risk of side effects. At the start of treatment, ganciclovir is usually given every 12 hours for the first few weeks

## Side Effects

See also Warning section.

Diarrhea, upset stomach, dizziness, drowsiness, unsteadiness, shaking (tremors), or pain/redness/irritation at the injection site may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly.

Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because he or she has judged the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

Tell your doctor right away if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur: mental/mood changes (such as confusion, hallucinations), signs of kidney problems (such as change in the amount of urine), seizures.

A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is rare. However, seek immediate medical attention if you notice any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including: rashes and itching

## Precautions

Before using ganciclovir, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to valganciclovir or acyclovir; or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients, which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your pharmacist for more details.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: kidney problems, a low number of blood cells (red or white blood cells, platelets), radiation treatment.

This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy or make it harder for you to think clearly. Alcohol or marijuana (cannabis) can worsen these effects. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs alertness until you can do it safely. Limit alcoholic beverages. Talk to your doctor if you are using marijuana (cannabis).

Wash your hands well to prevent the spread of infection

## Interactions

Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval.

Some products that may interact with this drug include: didanosine, imipenem/cilastatin.

You may be taking other drugs that decrease bone marrow function and lower your number of blood cells (such as cancer chemotherapy, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole, zidovudine) or other drugs that may cause kidney problems (such as cyclosporine). Your doctor or pharmacist will monitor you closely and adjust your medications to decrease your risk of serious side effects.

Ganciclovir is very similar to valganciclovir. Do not use medications containing valganciclovir while using ganciclovir.