

Box Jellyfish Antivenom

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Box Jellyfish Antivenom.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you having Box Jellyfish Antivenom against the benefits they expect it will have.

If you have any concerns about this medicine, ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet.
You may need to read it again.

What Box Jellyfish Antivenom is used for

What it is used for

Box Jellyfish Antivenom is given to those people who become ill after being stung by a box jellyfish.

It is also used in those people who have severe pain from the stings which cannot be controlled with pain relieving medicines.

Before antivenom is given, first aid measures must be used. Vinegar should be poured over any tentacles which are stuck to the skin before they are touched. The vinegar will not ease the pain but it will stop the tentacles from producing more poison and will help to protect the person who has been stung.

Not everyone who is stung needs the antivenom, as small areas of stinging are not usually dangerous even

though they are very painful. However, people who have large areas of stinging can become dangerously ill very quickly. In these people CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and other first aid measures must be given before starting antivenom therapy. In these people it is also essential to use an appropriate amount of antivenom to counteract the effects of the poison.

As Box Jellyfish Antivenom sometimes needs to be given quickly before arrival at hospital, the injection may be given by paramedical personnel such as ambulance officers.

How it works

Box Jellyfish Antivenom is an injection designed to help neutralise the effect of the poison (venom) of the box jellyfish.

It is made by immunising sheep against the venom of the box jellyfish and then collecting that part of the sheep's blood which neutralises this poison.

The antivenom is purified and made into an injection for people who may need it after being stung by a box jellyfish.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been given to you

Before you are given Box Jellyfish Antivenom

When you must not be given it

As there are sometimes unpleasant and dangerous reactions to the antivenom (see Side Effects), it

should not be given to people who have no effects from the sting.

However as Box Jellyfish Antivenom can be an emergency life-saving product, it should not be withheld from anyone who needs it.

Before you are given it

Tell your doctor if:

1. you have allergies to:

- any other medicines
- any other substances such as foods, preservatives or dyes.

2. you have, or have had any medical conditions, especially the following:

- asthma
- hayfever.

3. you have ever received an injection containing sheep serum.

4. you have ever had an injection of Box Jellyfish Antivenom.

5. you are pregnant or you are breast feeding.

Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits involved.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell him/her before you are given Box Jellyfish Antivenom.

How Box Jellyfish Antivenom is given

How much is given

The dose for both adults and children is one vial (20,000 units). The dose can be repeated as necessary.

Your doctor will take precautions to counteract any allergic reactions if they should happen.

How it is given

Usually, this medicine is diluted and given slowly as a drip into a vein. In situations where it is impossible to inject the fluid into a vein, or when the injection is given by paramedical personnel away from medical help, the contents of 3 vials should be injected into 3 different places in muscles on the outside of the thigh.

Box Jellyfish antivenom does not contain any antimicrobial preservative. It should be used once and any residue discarded.

After having Box Jellyfish Antivenom

When medicines are produced in animals and injected into you, it is always possible that viruses or other substances could be present in the medicine and cause an illness. These could be viruses or other infectious agents which may not yet have been discovered. In the past, there have been no reports of this ever having happened with this product.

If you have any queries about any aspect of this medicine, or questions regarding information in this leaflet, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well after having Box Jellyfish Antivenom.

It may have unwanted side effects in some people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

As the injection is made from sheep serum, side effects occur more commonly in those who have allergies, particularly if they have ever had injections before which were also prepared in sheep.

Allergic reactions can be treated by your doctor.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you have.

Tell your doctor immediately if you notice any of the following:

- sudden signs of allergy such as rash, itching or hives on the skin, swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body, shortness of breath, wheezing or trouble breathing
- rapid, shallow breathing, cold, clammy skin, a rapid, weak pulse, dizziness, weakness and fainting
- pinkish, itchy swellings on the skin, also called hives or nettle rash
- fever, swelling, skin rash, joint pains and swelling of the glands in the neck armpit or groin, anytime up to two weeks after the injection.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some people.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Storing Box Jellyfish Antivenom

Box Jellyfish Antivenom is usually stored in a doctor's surgery, hospital or ambulance. However, if you need to store it:

- **Keep it where children cannot reach it.**
- **Keep it in the original pack until it is needed.**
- **Keep it in the refrigerator, between 2°C and 8°C and protect it from light. Do not freeze Box Jellyfish Antivenom.**

Do not use Box Jellyfish Antivenom after the expiry date printed on the pack.

Do not use Box Jellyfish Antivenom if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

Product description

What it looks like

Box Jellyfish Antivenom is supplied in a vial.

Ingredients

Active ingredient:

- 20,000 units of Box Jellyfish Antivenom.

Other ingredients:

- phenol
- sodium chloride
- substances in sheep blood.

Distributor

Box Jellyfish Antivenom is distributed by:

CSL Biotherapies Pty Ltd
45 Poplar Road
Parkville 3052
Victoria Australia

The Australian Registration Number is AUST R 74891.

This leaflet was prepared in December 2008.