



## Palifermin

*Other Names: Kepivance*

### About this drug

This drug is used to reduce the risk of developing painful mouth sores associated with cancer treatment. It also helps mouth sores to heal faster. This drug is given intravenously (IV).

### Possible side effects

- Numbness and tingling in and around the mouth
- Change in the color of your tongue
- Feeling that your tongue is thicker
- Taste changes
- Rash, red or itchy skin, or swelling of the skin
- Fever
- Joint and muscle discomfort
- Effects on an unborn child; This drug may have harmful effects on an unborn child. For this reason, be sure to use effective methods of birth control during cancer treatment and for 2 weeks after stopping this drug. If you are exposed to this drug while pregnant, ask to speak to a genetic counselor. A genetic counselor can review the potential risks of problems with the fetus and with future pregnancies.
- Breastfeeding; Women are advised not to breastfeed during treatment because this drug could enter the breast milk and seriously harm a breastfeeding infant.

### Treating side effects

- Follow the instructions from your nurse about mouth care. Avoid mouthwash that contains alcohol. Avoid alcohol and smoking because they can irritate your mouth and throat.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about medication that is available to help prevent or lessen pain or joint and muscle discomfort.

- Do not put anything on your rash, reddened skin, or sores on your skin unless your doctor or nurse says you may. Keep the area clean and dry.
- Discuss effective methods of birth control with your doctor.

## Food and drug interactions

There are no known interactions of palifermin with food. This drug may interact with other medication. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the medication and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs, and others) that you are currently taking. The safety and effectiveness of dietary supplements and alternative diets are often unknown. Using these might unexpectedly affect your cancer or interfere with your treatment. Until more is known, you should not use dietary supplements or alternative diets without your cancer doctor's advice.

## When to call the doctor

Notify your doctor or nurse **immediately** if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.5 F (38.0 C) or above
- Chills
- Trouble breathing

Notify your doctor or nurse **as soon as possible** if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Painful mouth or throat, or if you are unable to eat or drink
- Sores, rash, reddened areas, or itchiness that is unrelieved by prescribed medication
- Persistent loss of appetite or if you are losing weight rapidly such as 5 pounds in 1 week