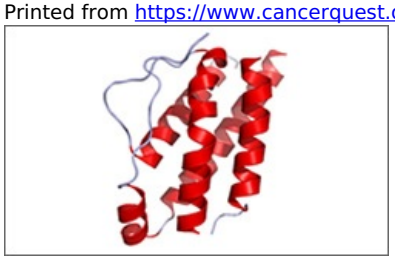
Interleukin-2 (IL-2), Aldesleukin

Printed from https://www.cancerquest.org/patients/drug-reference/interleukin-2-il-2-aldesleukin on 11/14/2026



Brand name: Proleukin®
FDA approval: Yes
Manufacturer Link
Usage:

IL-2 is used to treat metastatic kidney (renal) cancer and metastatic melanoma. IL-2 is administered into a vein (intravenously). It may be combined with other drugs. It is also being investigated for its use in treating some lymphomas and leukemias.1

1 Zhang C, Zhang X, Chen X. Interleukin-2 priming chemotherapy: a strategy to improve the remission of refractory/relapsed T cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Med Hypotheses. 2013 Nov;81(5):878-80. [PUBMED]

Mechanism:

Interleukin-2 (IL-2) is a naturally occurring protein that is normally made by the body in small amounts. It allows cells of the immune system to communicate with each other. The drug, Proleukin®, is a man-made version of IL-2. This drug works by activating cells of the immune system (T lymphocytes) to attack and kill cancer cells.1

Stick Sphere Line Rotate

The diagram above shows the 3D molecular structure of Interleukin-2 with its alpha receptor.

1 Aldesleukin. MedlinePlus. https://medlineplus.gov/druginfo/meds/a692009.html

Side effects:

Interleukin-2 has a variety of side effects, including: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, sores in the mouth and throat, tiredness, weakness and dizziness.1

1 Aldesleukin. MedlinePlus. https://medlineplus.gov/druginfo/meds/a692009.html

Contraindications:

Patients need to have normal heart (cardiac) and lung (pulmonary) function as determined by a thallium stress test.