

SIDE EFFECT MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Peptide therapy side effects

Every side effect explained in plain English. What it feels like, why it happens, and exactly what to do about it — step by step.

01 THE BIG PICTURE

Peptides Have a Mild Side Effect Profile

Peptides are small proteins that send specific signals to your body. Compared to traditional medications, their side effect profiles are generally mild. Most side effects are related to the injection itself or the body adjusting to new signaling.

This guide covers the peptides we use most at Range Medical — BPC-157, TB-4 (Thymosin Beta-4), CJC-1295/Ipamorelin, and Tesamorelin/Ipamorelin. Range Medical monitors all peptide protocols with regular check-ins. For each side effect below, we give you a clear plan so you never have to just guess.

1 Injection Site Reactions

Redness, stinging, bumps, or bruising.

2 Flushing & Warmth

Hot flash feeling after injection.

3 Increased Hunger

Appetite spike after injection.

4 Water Retention & Bloating

Mild puffiness, especially early on.

5 Fatigue or Drowsiness

Sleepiness or deep relaxation after dosing.

6 Headache

Mild headache in the first week.

7 Nausea

Mild stomach upset, much lighter than meds.

8 Tingling in Hands

Pins-and-needles feeling in fingers.

1

02 MOST COMMON

Injection Site Reactions

AFFECTS NEARLY ALL PEPTIDE USERS AT SOME POINT – USUALLY MILD AND SHORT-LIVED

What It Feels Like

Redness, slight swelling, itching, stinging during injection, or a small bump or bruise at the injection site. Usually mild and resolves in hours to a day. Some people notice more stinging with certain peptides than others.

Why It Happens

Subcutaneous injection causes a normal tissue response. Your skin is reacting to the needle and the fluid being deposited under the skin. Some peptides — especially BPC-157 — can cause more stinging during injection due to their pH level. This is not an allergic reaction. It is a local tissue response that resolves on its own.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Let the peptide reach room temperature before injecting. Cold solution stings more. Take it out of the fridge 5-10 minutes before your injection.

Inject slowly. Push the plunger gently over 5-10 seconds. Rushing the injection causes more tissue irritation and stinging.

Rotate your injection sites. Abdomen, thighs, and love handles are all good options. Never inject into the same spot twice in a row. Rotating prevents buildup of irritation in one area.

Ice the area briefly before injecting if stinging bothers you. A few seconds of ice numbs the skin and makes the needle entry less noticeable.

IF IT CONTINUES

Try a different injection site. Some areas of your body may react more than others. Experiment with different spots to find what works best for you.

Contact us about injection technique. We can walk you through your technique at your next visit to make sure everything is dialed in.

CALL US IF

Expanding redness beyond 2 inches from the injection site, especially if it is warm to the touch. This could indicate infection.

Pus, fever, or increasing pain. These are signs of infection and need prompt evaluation.

Hives or swelling elsewhere on your body. This could be an allergic reaction and needs immediate attention.

Completely Normal

Injection site reactions get easier with practice. Stinging decreases as your technique improves and your body gets used to the process. Most people barely notice it after the first couple of weeks.

2

03 COMMON

Flushing & Warmth

COMMON WITH GROWTH HORMONE PEPTIDES — CJC/IPAMORELIN, TESAMORELIN/IPAMORELIN

What It Feels Like

A sudden feeling of warmth, like a hot flash. Your face and ears may turn red. It comes on within minutes of injection and lasts 10-30 minutes. Some people feel a warm wave move through their upper body. It is not painful — just noticeable and sometimes surprising the first time it happens.

Why It Happens

Growth hormone-releasing peptides can cause brief vasodilation — your blood vessels temporarily open wider. This increases blood flow to your skin, which creates that warm, flushed feeling. This is actually a sign that the peptide is active and doing its job. It is not a problem and it is not an allergic reaction.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Inject before bed. This is the simplest fix — you sleep right through the flushing and never notice it. Most peptide protocols are designed for evening dosing anyway.

Expect it and know it passes. Once you know what it is, the flushing becomes a non-event. It is brief, harmless, and predictable.

Cool cloth on your face if it feels uncomfortable. A damp washcloth for a few minutes is all you need.

IF BOTHERSOME

Contact us about adjusting timing or splitting dose. If the flushing is happening at an inconvenient time or feels too intense, we can adjust your protocol to minimize it.

A Sign It Is Working

Flushing means the peptide is doing its job — triggering growth hormone release. It becomes less noticeable over time as your body adjusts to the signaling. Most people stop noticing it entirely within 1-2 weeks.

Increased Hunger

COMMON WITH GROWTH HORMONE PEPTIDES — CJC/IPAMORELIN, TESAMORELIN/IPAMORELIN

What It Feels Like

Feeling hungrier than usual, especially 30-60 minutes after injection. Your stomach may growl. You might find yourself thinking about food more than normal. This is a temporary spike in appetite that follows the injection timing.

Why It Happens

Growth hormone peptides stimulate ghrelin — the hunger hormone. This is part of the GH release cascade and is actually a positive sign that the peptide is working. Ghrelin is the same hormone that signals your body to release growth hormone naturally, so the hunger spike is directly linked to the therapeutic effect.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Inject at bedtime. You sleep through the hunger spike. This is the most effective and simplest solution.

If injecting during the day, plan a high-protein snack. Have something ready — chicken, eggs, Greek yogurt, a protein shake. Protein satisfies the hunger better than carbs or fat.

Use the appetite to fuel muscle growth if that is one of your goals. The hunger window after injection is a great time to get quality nutrition in.

Use It To Your Advantage

The increased hunger is temporary — it follows the injection and then subsides. If you are trying to build muscle or recover from injury, this appetite boost can actually help you get the nutrition your body needs. Channel it into better nutrition timing rather than fighting it.

4

05 COMMON

Water Retention & Bloating

COMMON WITH GROWTH HORMONE PEPTIDES, ESPECIALLY IN THE FIRST 2-4 WEEKS

What It Feels Like

Mild puffiness, especially in your hands and face. Rings may feel tighter than usual. The scale might show 1-3 pounds more than expected. You might notice your fingers feel slightly swollen in the morning. This is not fat gain — it is water.

Why It Happens

Growth hormone increases water retention and can cause mild edema. This is a known GH effect, not something unique to peptides — it happens with any therapy that raises growth hormone levels. Your body is adjusting to a new hormonal signal, and part of that adjustment involves holding onto a bit more fluid temporarily.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Stay hydrated. It sounds counterintuitive, but drinking more water helps your body release excess water. Dehydration makes water retention worse.

Reduce sodium intake. High sodium makes water retention worse. Cut back on processed foods, fast food, and added salt for a few weeks.

Give it 2-3 weeks to stabilize. Water retention is almost always a first-few-weeks phenomenon. Your body adjusts and the puffiness resolves on its own.

Light exercise. Movement helps your lymphatic system clear excess fluid. A daily walk or light workout makes a noticeable difference.

IF IT CONTINUES BEYOND 4 WEEKS

Contact us. Persistent water retention may indicate the dose is too high. We can adjust your protocol to find the right level.

Temporary Adjustment

Water retention stabilizes within 2-4 weeks for most people. It is your body getting used to higher growth hormone signaling. Once your system adjusts, the puffiness resolves and you are left with the benefits.

Fatigue or Drowsiness

COMMON WITH BPC-157 AND EVENING DOSING OF GROWTH HORMONE PEPTIDES

What It Feels Like

Feeling sleepy or mildly fatigued after injection. Some people describe a deep sense of relaxation — like your body is winding down. You might feel ready for bed earlier than usual or find it easier to fall asleep. This is usually pleasant, not debilitating.

Why It Happens

BPC-157 has gut-brain axis effects that can promote relaxation. Growth hormone peptides taken at night enhance deep sleep — which is actually the goal. Your body may also be channeling energy into repair processes, especially if you are recovering from injury or inflammation. The fatigue is often a sign that your body is prioritizing healing.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Inject at bedtime. Take advantage of the sleepiness rather than fighting it. Evening dosing lets you sleep through the fatigue and benefit from deeper, more restorative sleep.

If daytime fatigue is an issue, move your injection to evening. Switching from morning to evening dosing often eliminates the problem entirely.

IF PERSISTENT DAYTIME FATIGUE

Contact us to review dose and timing. If you are feeling fatigued during the day despite evening dosing, we may need to adjust your protocol. Persistent fatigue can also indicate other factors we should check.

Working in Your Favor

Better deep sleep means better recovery. Most people report improved energy within 1-2 weeks as their body adjusts. The initial drowsiness transitions into better sleep quality and more energy during the day — not less.

6

07 LESS COMMON

Headache

AFFECTS A SMALLER NUMBER OF PEOPLE — USUALLY LIMITED TO THE FIRST WEEK OF TREATMENT

What It Feels Like

A mild headache in the hours after injection. Dull, not severe. It usually happens in the first week of starting a new peptide and goes away on its own. It is not a migraine-level headache — more of a background ache that you notice but can function through.

Why It Happens

Peptides that affect growth hormone can temporarily change fluid balance in the brain. As your body adjusts to new GH signaling, there can be minor shifts in intracranial pressure. Dehydration makes this significantly worse — and many people do not drink enough water when starting a new protocol.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Drink extra water on injection days. Aim for an extra 16-24 ounces beyond your normal intake. Hydration is the single best prevention for peptide-related headaches.

Take an OTC pain reliever. Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen) works well for these mild headaches. Take as directed on the package.

IF IT CONTINUES BEYOND 1 WEEK

Contact us for a dose review. Headaches that persist past the first week may indicate the dose needs adjustment. We can fine-tune your protocol.

Short-Lived

Headaches are almost always a first-week adjustment and do not return. Once your body acclimates to the peptide signaling, this side effect resolves completely. Most people only experience it for 1-3 days.

7

08 LESS COMMON

Nausea

AFFECTS A SMALLER NUMBER OF PEOPLE — MUCH Milder THAN WEIGHT LOSS MEDICATION
NAUSEA

What It Feels Like

Mild stomach upset after injection. This is not the severe nausea that comes with weight loss medications — it is more like a mild unsettled feeling that passes relatively quickly. Some people describe it as a brief queasy wave that comes and goes within 15-30 minutes.

Why It Happens

Some peptides can trigger a mild GI response. BPC-157 is a gastric peptide — it was originally discovered in stomach juice — so it can cause mild stomach sensations early on as your gut adjusts to it. Injecting on a completely empty or very full stomach can make it worse. Timing and food intake play a big role.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Inject at bedtime. You sleep through any stomach upset and it is gone by morning.

Have a small snack 30 minutes before if you are dosing in the morning. A few crackers or a piece of toast can settle your stomach enough to prevent nausea.

Try ginger tea. Ginger is a natural anti-nausea remedy that works well for mild peptide-related stomach upset.

IF IT CONTINUES

Contact us. We can adjust the timing of your injections or explore whether a different peptide in your protocol is the cause. A simple schedule change often fixes this completely.

Mild and Temporary

Peptide-related nausea is much lighter than medication nausea and usually resolves in days, not weeks. Your body adapts quickly to the signaling, and most people never experience it again after the first few doses.

8

09 LESS COMMON

Tingling or Numbness in Hands

LESS COMMON — ASSOCIATED WITH GROWTH HORMONE PEPTIDES LIKE CJC/IPAMORELIN AND TESAMORELIN

What It Feels Like

A pins-and-needles feeling in your hands or fingers, especially in the morning. Similar to carpal tunnel symptoms — tingling, slight numbness, or a feeling like your hands "fell asleep." It may be worse when you first wake up and improve as you move around.

Why It Happens

Growth hormone can cause mild fluid retention around nerves, particularly in the carpal tunnel area of the wrist. As GH levels rise, the slight increase in tissue fluid puts pressure on the median nerve. This is more common if GH levels are rising quickly or if the dose is on the higher end.

WHAT TO DO

TRY FIRST

Wrist stretches. Gently flex and extend your wrists several times in the morning. This helps relieve pressure on the nerve and gets fluid moving.

Sleep with your wrists straight. Do not sleep with your wrists bent or tucked under your pillow. A bent wrist compresses the carpal tunnel and makes tingling worse. A wrist brace at night can help keep them straight.

Give it 1-2 weeks. Mild tingling often resolves on its own as your body adjusts to the new GH levels.

IF IT CONTINUES

Contact us. We may need to reduce your dose. Tingling that persists is a clear signal that the dose should be adjusted. This is a straightforward fix.

DO NOT IGNORE IF WORSENING

If tingling is getting worse, spreading, or accompanied by weakness — contact us right away. Worsening symptoms need prompt dose adjustment to prevent prolonged nerve compression.

Dose-Related

This resolves with dose adjustment. It is not a sign of permanent nerve damage. Once the dose is dialed back, fluid retention around the nerve decreases and the tingling goes

away. Most people find a dose that gives them the benefits without this side effect.

10 IMPORTANT

When to Contact Us

Most side effects can be managed with the steps in this guide. But some situations need our help right away.

CALL US RIGHT AWAY

- ! Signs of allergic reaction — hives, throat swelling, difficulty breathing
- ! Infection at injection site — expanding redness, fever, pus
- ! Severe persistent headache that does not respond to OTC pain relievers
- ! Sudden joint pain or swelling

SCHEDULE A CHECK-IN

- ✓ Any side effect lasting more than 2 weeks
- ✓ Questions about injection technique
- ✓ Tingling in hands that is worsening
- ✓ Want to adjust timing or dose

Important: This guide is for Range Medical patients on peptide therapy. It is not a substitute for personalized medical advice. Do not adjust your dosing without provider guidance. All peptide protocols are monitored by licensed providers. Individual results vary.

Questions? We Are Here.

Whether you need a dose adjustment, help with injection technique, or just want to talk through what you are feeling — our team can help.

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