

Alemtuzumab (Lemtrada)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact: Medical Elective Service (MES)
The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE.
Telephone 01904 721062 or email yhs-tr.MES.PatientEnquiries@nhs.net

Information about Alemtuzumab

Alemtuzumab is a drug given by Intravenous Infusion. It is used to treat highly active relapsing remitting Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

It works by targeting the T and B cells, which are part of your immune system. These cells normally attack the viruses and bacteria in your body, so this is classed as an immunosuppressant medication.

Information about your infusion

Your Alemtuzumab infusions will initially be every day for five days. You may be eligible to receive the treatment again in a year's time, where the treatment will be given over three days.

The day before your appointment you will need to contact the Medical Elective Service (MES) by phone to complete a health screening checklist to ensure you are well enough to be given your treatment. You will need to do this before each infusion. If you do not contact us your appointment will have to be cancelled and rescheduled to the next available appointment.

If you are unable to use a telephone to complete this checklist you can have a carer or relative make this phone call for you if you are happy for them to do so. Otherwise please contact MES on the email address above as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.

On admission to MES a member of staff will weigh you, record your observations (including blood pressure, pulse and temperature) and insert a cannula (a soft plastic tube) into a vein in your hand or arm.

You will also need to provide a urine sample before your infusion. If this is likely to be difficult for you please ask your consultant or specialist nurse for a specimen pot so you can do a sample on the morning of your infusion to bring with you to MES.

On days one, two and three the MES nurses will give you an infusion of steroids through the cannula over one hour (this is not given on days four and five). On completion of the infusion you will be given a 50ml saline (salt solution) flush to ensure you receive the full dose of medication, which will take 30 minutes.

You will also be given paracetamol and antihistamine tablets, to help reduce the risk of having a reaction to the infusion. Please inform your nurse if you have already taken either of these medications on the morning of your infusion.

The nurse will supply you with tablets to take home with you, an antiviral medication and an antibiotic. You will be asked to take your first dose of these before your Alemtuzumab infusion, whilst on MES.

Your Alemtuzumab infusion will then be started by one of the nurses on MES.

The Alemtuzumab infusion will take four hours each day, during which a member of staff will take your observations at half hourly intervals. On completion of the infusion you will be given a 50ml saline (salt solution) flush to ensure you receive the full dose of medication, which will take two hours.

After your infusion is finished, you will need to remain on MES to be monitored for two hours to ensure you feel ok. A member of staff will then repeat your observations and remove your cannula.

MES will provide hot drinks, bottled water and biscuits. We will provide sandwiches if you are with us over lunch time. You are welcome to bring any food or drink (non-alcoholic) with you to your appointment.

Possible side effects

Possible side effects that Alemtuzumab may cause include flushing of the face and neck, rash, headache, tiredness, and nausea. This list is not exhaustive, and you should contact your doctor or specialist nurse for further information if required.

Very rarely you may experience an allergic reaction to the medication, with symptoms such as hives (itchy, raised welts), itching, swelling of the tongue, chest pain or shortness of breath.

If you experience any of these symptoms or feel unwell in any way during your infusion you should inform a member of the nursing staff immediately.

If you have any problems following your Alemtuzumab infusion, please contact your consultant or specialist nurse.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Medical Elective Service, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE.

or email yhs-tr.MES.PatientEnquiries@nhs.net

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email

yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

Please telephone or email if you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio.

如果你要求本資 不同的 或 式提供 , 電或發電

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje potrzebne są w innym języku lub formacie, należy zadzwonić lub wysłać wiadomość e-mail

Bu bilgileri değişik bir lisanda ya da formatta istiyorsanız lütfen telefon ediniz ya da e-posta gönderiniz

Telephone: 01904 725566

Owner	Sister, Medical Elective Service
Date first issued	April 2023
Review Date	April 2026
Version	1
Approved by	CG6 Clinical Governance Team.
Document Reference	PIL1642

© 2023 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All Rights reserved.

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk