

# **Infliximab (Rheumatology patients only)**

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](mailto:yhs-tr.MES.PatientEnquiries@nhs.net)

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## **Information about Infliximab**

Infliximab is a drug given by Intravenous Infusion. It is used to treat Rheumatoid Arthritis, Ankylosing Spondylitis or Psoriatic Arthritis that has not improved after treatment with other medications.

Infliximab is an immunosuppressant medication. It works by targeting inflammation, reducing the over activity in your immune system.

The dosage of Infliximab is calculated for each infusion based on your body weight and the nature of your condition, so the dose you receive may change throughout your treatment course.

## **Information about your infusion**

Your Infliximab infusion will initially be given at weeks zero, two and six. After this your infusions will usually be given on an eight-weekly basis.

Prior to your first appointment you are required to have a blood sample taken using a blood form provided to you with your appointment letter. You will need to have this blood sample taken two to seven days prior to your appointment.

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.

Your Infliximab infusion will then be given by one of the nurses on MES.

Your Infliximab infusion will be infused through the cannula, during which time you must remain in MES. On completion of the infusion, you will be given a 50ml saline (salt solution) flush to ensure you receive the full dose of medication.

After your infusion is finished you will need to remain on MES to be monitored to ensure you feel ok.

The length of time of your infusion and how long you will need to be monitored will change throughout the course of your treatment, and is listed in the table below:

| Infusion Number | Infusion duration | Monitoring Duration |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| One to Four     | Two hours         | Two hours           |
| Five            | One hour          | One hour            |
| Six to Nine     | One hour          | None                |
| Ten onwards     | Thirty minutes    | None                |

A member of staff will then repeat your observations and remove your cannula.

You will be given the date and time of your next infusion before discharge.

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 (not alcohol) with you to your appointment.

## **Possible side effects**

Possible side effects that Infliximab may cause include dizziness, headache, tiredness, nausea and diarrhoea. 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 Infliximab 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](mailto: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](mailto: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

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