

Information for patients receiving rituximab

Dear Patient,

We would like to let you know about some changes to your treatment with rituximab that are happening from June 2017. As from 5th June 2017 University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust will be changing the brand of rituximab used. Until recently only one brand of rituximab (MabThera) has been available. A new brand of rituximab known as Truxima is now available.

Why is the brand of rituximab changing?

Rituximab is classed as a biologic therapy and as such is an expensive drug. Biologic drugs account for 23% of NHS money spent on drugs. Truxima has been developed as an equivalent to MabThera in safety, quality and the way that it works. Truxima will cost less and this means that the money saved can be used elsewhere to help more patients in the NHS.

Should I notice any difference in my treatment?

We do not expect you to notice any difference between the treatments. We will be monitoring your condition and response to Truxima closely.

What happens if I feel that Truxima is not as helpful as the original brand of rituximab (MabThera)?

Where there is clear evidence that someone does not respond as well to Truxima the medical team will discuss your treatment plan with you. It will be possible to obtain the original form of rituximab if there is a clear lack of benefit with the new brand Truxima.

Am I more likely to have side-effects from Truxima?

We do not expect people to have significantly more side-effects with Truxima than with the current brand MabThera. The potential side-effects are the same as those of MabThera and explained in the rituximab leaflet from Arthritis Research.org.uk. Copies of these leaflets are available in clinic areas and the renal infusion suite. If you feel you are having different or new side effects from Truxima please let the team know so we can review you and discuss your treatment plan.

We will be issuing you with new patient alert cards when you receive your infusion of Truxima. We recommend you carry the alert card with you at all times. You should show the alert card when attending for medical or dental care.

Who should I contact if I have any questions?

Please contact Sarah Logan, Renal Inflammatory Disease Clinical Nurse Specialist on 07827 232 646 if you have any questions or concerns. More information is available regarding Biosimilar medications from the European Medicines Agency: www.ema.europa.eu

Paper copies are available from Sarah Logan.



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4323.

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