



Guselkumab

Information for people with inflammatory bowel disease

PE-IBD-15

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Guselkumab blocks interleukin-23, the same messenger as risankizumab. Its distinctive advantage is that the whole course, including the starting doses, can be given as injections under the skin – so it can be used without any hospital infusions.

Why you are taking it

Guselkumab is used for moderate to severe Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis when steroids, immunosuppressants or other biologics have not worked or were not tolerated. It is a good option if you have poor veins, live far from the hospital, or simply prefer to avoid infusions.

How to take it

There are two ways to start. Either 200 mg is given as an infusion into a vein at week 0, week 4 and week 8, or 400 mg is given as injections under the skin at the same three time points. Maintenance is then either 100 mg under the skin every eight weeks starting at week 16, or 200 mg every four weeks starting at week 12; we will tell you which schedule applies to you. Keep the pens in the fridge, let one reach room temperature before injecting, rotate between the thigh and the abdomen, and use the sharps bin. Before starting we screen for tuberculosis and viral hepatitis.

How long it takes to work

Improvement often begins within the first two months, and the full response is assessed at around week 12 to 16, before the maintenance schedule is settled.

Blood tests and monitoring

We check blood tests before starting and then every three to six months, and judge the response on symptoms, calprotectin and endoscopy.

Side effects

Side effect	What it means and what to do
Upper respiratory infection – sore throat, blocked nose, cough	Common.
Headache, joint pain, tiredness	Common.
Injection site reaction	Common, mild and settles in a few days.
Infection	Report fever or any infection early – see sheet PE-IBD-04 .
Reactivation of tuberculosis	The reason for screening. Report a persistent cough, night sweats or weight loss.
Liver enzyme changes	Uncommon and picked up on routine blood tests.

Important precautions

- Do not inject if you have an active infection or fever – contact your doctor first.
- Do not use a pen that has been frozen, is discoloured or cloudy, or has been out of the fridge longer than the label allows.
- When the starting doses are given by injection, more than one pen is used on the same day – check you have used all of them.
- No live vaccines. Non-live vaccines are recommended – see sheet [PE-IBD-04](#).
- Take a cool bag and spare pens when you travel.
- For a repeat prescription, message the clinic. If there is no reply after 48 hours send the message again, and if there is still no reply, come to the clinic.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Guselkumab is a newer medicine and the information on its use in pregnancy is more limited than for the anti-TNF medicines. It is not known to be harmful, and it may be continued if it is the treatment keeping your disease settled, but the decision should be made with us before you conceive. Tell your doctor as soon as you know you are pregnant, and arrange the deferral of the baby's live vaccines – BCG above all, given at birth in Oman – before you deliver; see sheet [PE-IBD-04](#). Discuss breastfeeding with us.

Tell your doctor straight away if

- You have a fever, or any sign of infection.
- You develop breathlessness, swelling of the face or lips, or a widespread rash.
- You have a cough lasting more than three weeks, night sweats or weight loss.
- The injection site becomes hot, hard, spreading red or painful after a few days.
- Your symptoms return before the next dose is due.

Tell your doctor so they know and can bring your appointment forward. But if you feel seriously unwell, go to the Emergency Department first – do not wait for a reply.

Contact your doctor using the numbers your clinic has given you. If you are seriously unwell, or it is outside working hours, go to the Emergency Department rather than waiting for a reply. Brand names and preparations may differ – check the label on your own medicine. General safety advice is in sheet [PE-IBD-04](#). Version 1.0 · review date October 2028.

This leaflet is general information and does not replace advice from your own doctor.

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