



Starting treatment with Infliximab

P a t i e n t I n f o r m a t i o n

INTRODUCTION

Your doctor has prescribed treatment with Infliximab (Flixabi[®], Inflectra[®], Remicade[®], Remsima[®] or Zessly[®]). This brochure provides further information about this medication.

WHAT IS INFLIXIMAB?

Infliximab consists of proteins or antibodies that inactivate excess tumour necrosis factor or TNF, thus reducing the inflammatory process associated with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

TREATMENT SCHEDULE

Infliximab is administered intravenously into the blood stream whilst you are a day patient in the hospital. The Infliximab dose you will be given depends upon your body weight. A standard dose is 5 mg/kg. The first dose of Infliximab is followed by another dose two weeks later and another one six weeks later. If your body reacts well, a drip infusion will be administered every eight weeks.

Your dose may vary from this schedule following consultation with your doctor.

- Standard dose

5 mg/kg in weeks 0, 2, 6
loading dose



5 mg/kg every 8 weeks
maintenance dose

DO I HAVE TO FAST BEFORE TREATMENT WITH INFLIXIMAB?

You don't need to fast before an Infliximab infusion.

HOW LONG DOES THE INFUSION TAKE?

At the start of the Infliximab treatment it takes approximately two to four hours. From the fifth infusion the duration can usually be cut to one hour.

- Infusion duration

1st infusion	2nd infusion	3rd infusion	4th infusion	from the 5th infusion
2 hours	3 to 4 hours	3 to 4 hours	2 hours	1 hour

Get someone to accompany you for the second and third infusion.

SIDE EFFECTS

As with any medication, side effects may occur during or after the infusion. The most commonly mentioned side effects are nausea, stomach ache and headache, but itching, swelling or redness of the skin, dizziness, low blood pressure and chest pain can also occur.

Infliximab can affect your immune response, which means that you are at a higher risk of infections such as herpes or flu. Infections of the upper airways such as sinusitis are most common.

WHAT IF YOU FEEL ILL BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER YOUR TREATMENT?

If you feel ill or have a fever ($> 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$) **before** your treatment, you should notify the infusion unit in good time by calling +32 16 34 45 26.

If symptoms occur **during** the treatment always tell the nurse in charge.

If you encounter problems **after** the treatment, please contact the IBD nursing team.

Tips

- ✓ Do you have an appointment with your doctor or dentist? Always remember to tell them you are being treated with Infliximab.
- ✓ Did you have a blood test or other examination not at UZ Leuven? If so, remember to bring the results with you when visiting the hospital.
- ✓ Are you scheduled to have an operation or other specific intervention? Are you planning to go on a (long distance) trip? Do you intend to try and get pregnant? Remember to tell your doctor or nurse in good time.
- ✓ Ask for the IBD vaccination brochure.
- ✓ Make it clear exactly which medications you are taking. Make a list and include the dose of each medication.
- ✓ Don't forget to ask your doctor for relevant prescriptions/certificates.

WHICH PREPARATIONS ARE NECESSARY BEFORE TREATMENT WITH INFLIXIMAB?

First a lung X-ray (RX thorax) and (intradermal) skin test need to be performed in order to exclude earlier exposure to tuberculosis. The doctor or IBD nurse will then check your vaccinations together with you.

PREGNANCY AND VACCINATIONS

If you received treatment with Infliximab during pregnancy, it is important that you tell your baby's doctor before your baby is vaccinated. Your baby must not be given a 'live vaccine' such as the Rota vaccine in the first nine months after the birth.

DIFFERENT STAGES OF TREATMENT WITH INFLIXIMAB

- **Stage 1:** checking the symptoms. The nurse will take you to your seat and ask a few questions, including whether you have already completed and forwarded the online questionnaire via Mynexuzhealth. This will save time.
- **Stage 2:** measuring parameters: blood pressure, pulse rate, temperature, weight
- **Stage 3:** blood sample
- **Stage 4:** inserting the drip and administering Infliximab
- **Stage 5:** removing the drip and checking parameters
- **Stage 6:** planning a new appointment

REGISTRATION

You always need to register in the hospital's main reception hall. You will be given a wristband with your personal data. You can then follow the gold arrow to E 420 on the fourth floor.

IMPORTANT

- If you cannot attend an appointment, please notify the infusion unit in good time by calling 016 34 45 26. This will enable us to help another patient.
- You must not leave the infusion unit during your treatment.
- Internet access is provided.
- In normal circumstances you will be able to drive home afterwards.
- Please complete the Mynexuzhealth questionnaire at the latest 48 hours beforehand.

FURTHER QUESTIONS?

If so, please contact your IBD nursing team by email ibdnurse@uzleuven.be

In urgent cases: call 016 34 06 21 (from 10.00 to 12.00 hrs)

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Duplication of this text and these illustrations shall always be subject to prior approval from the UZ Leuven Communications Department.

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Consult your medical record via
nexuzhealth.com or

