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# Benralizumab for severe eosinophilic asthma

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Department of Respiratory

Information for Patients

## What is severe eosinophilic asthma?

Asthma is a condition of the lungs which makes the airways narrow and inflamed. Eosinophils are a type of white blood cell. People with severe eosinophilic asthma have too many eosinophils in their blood. These can move into the lungs and cause inflammation. This inflammation can lead to an increase in your asthma symptoms.

Most people with asthma can control their symptoms with inhalers. A person with severe asthma may struggle to manage their symptoms even with high doses of medicines.

## What are the benefits of having benralizumab?

Benralizumab is a biologic medicine. It reduces the number of eosinophils in the blood and lungs. This helps reduce the inflammation in your lungs. This should lower the number of asthma flare-ups you have. You may not notice a change to your daily symptoms.

## How often would I need to have benralizumab?

- We inject benralizumab into the layer under your skin using a pre-filled pen.
- We will give you a 30mg dose of benralizumab every 4 weeks for the first 3 doses. After that you will have a dose every 8 weeks.
- We often start treatment in the clinic at the Glenfield Hospital. When your asthma is stable you may be able to give your injections at home.
- If benralizumab improves your asthma control, we may give you the treatment long term.

## When will I start treatment?

The severe asthma team will see if this treatment is suitable for you. A severe asthma nurse will then contact you to book an appointment to begin treatment.

You must take this treatment at the right time. If you cannot get to an appointment please contact the severe asthma nurses as soon as you can. We will need to make you a new appointment. This may delay your treatment.

## Will the treatment work for me?

We think this treatment will reduce your asthma flare ups.

A doctor will see you 12 months after you have started treatment. This is to see if it is working for you.  We may see you earlier if you or the team feel the medication is not working as well as we would like.

## Are there any side effects to benralizumab?

These are the common side effects of benralizumab (affecting up to 1 in 10 people):

- headache,
- sore throat,
- tenderness at the injection site,
- fever (high temperature),
- rash or hives,

It is rare, but  people may have a severe allergic reaction after having their benralizumab injection. Signs of this include:

- difficulty breathing,
- swelling,
- dizziness,
- feeling unwell.

If your injections are started in clinic, you will need to stay for 30 minutes after each of the first 3 injections. This is to make sure that you do not have any side effects.

**If you think you are having an allergic reaction get medical help right away.**

## Should I continue with my other asthma medicines?

We use benralizumab with your other asthma medicines. You should continue to take all of your regular medicines including your inhalers. Once your asthma is better controlled, any changes to your medicines will be made by the severe asthma team. You will always need to continue taking a preventer inhaler.

## How often will I be reviewed?

If you respond well to benralizumab, the respiratory consultant will see you at the end of the first year of treatment. If you, or the specialist nurse team have any concerns about your asthma, you will be seen more often than this.

If your asthma is well controlled, then benralizumab will be continued and you will be seen every 12 months. If you do not come to this appointment then we will not be able to continue prescribing benralizumab to you.

If your asthma is not controlled, we will look into why and make another treatment plan.

The contact details of the severe asthma team are on the last page. You can contact them directly if you have any concerns.

## Can I have vaccinations?

You should continue to have your Flu and Covid vaccinations if offered. If you need any other vaccinations, like live vaccines, please contact the severe asthma service to check if it is safe to have them, using the link on the next page.

## More information

Please contact the severe asthma specialist nurses if:

- you would like more information about benralizumab and your treatment options.
- you would like an appointment with the Consultant Pharmacist to talk about this medication in more detail.
- you are thinking of becoming pregnant, you are pregnant or are breast feeding.
- you cannot come to an appointment.

## Useful links

The websites below have more information about your treatment:

Asthma + Lung UK website: www.asthmaandlung.org.uk

Benralizumab patient information leaflet: www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.10559.pdf

## Contact details

The severe asthma specialist nurses can be contacted on the link below or scan the QR code:

accurx.nhs.uk/patient-initiated/rwesvas

Working hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice
Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

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If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead
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