

Dupilumab for treating severe asthma

Department of Respiratory
Information for Patients

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What is severe asthma?

Asthma is a condition of the lungs which makes the airways narrow and inflamed. This inflammation can increase 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 dupilumab?

Dupilumab is a biologic medicine. It blocks the action of proteins called interleukins IL-4 and IL-13. 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 dupilumab?

- We inject dupilumab into the layer under your skin using a pre-filled pen.
- A 400mg dose of dupilumab is given for the first dose, then 200mg every 2 weeks after that.
- We often start treatment in the clinic at the Glenfield Hospital. When your asthma is stable you may be able to give yourself the injections at home.
- If dupilumab 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 a new appointment for you. 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 dupilumab?

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

- eye redness, dryness or itching,
- eye infections,
- cold sores,
- joint pain,
- reaction at injection site like redness, swelling, and pain,

If you have any new eye problems, please see an optician or go to eye casualty to get your eyes checked. Please let them know you are taking dupilumab.

Rarely, some people may have a severe allergic reaction after having their dupilumab 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 dupilumab with your other asthma medicine. You should continue to take all of your regular medicines including your inhalers. Once your asthma is better controlled, any changes to your medicine 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 dupilumab, 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 dupilumab 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 dupilumab 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 next 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.

You should not have any live vaccines whilst you are being treated with dupilumab. If you are offered a live vaccine, please ask your health care provider if there is an alternative, or contact the severe asthma service using the link on the next page.

More information

Please contact the severe asthma specialist nurses if:

- you would like more information about dupilumab 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

Dupilumab patient information leaflet: www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.11323.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

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸے دوسرے زبان میں چاہتے ہو، تو 'ਕਿਰਪਾ' کر کے 'ਹੇਠਾਂ' ਦਿੱਤੇ گئے ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ' ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead
or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net

We are a research hospital and you may be asked to take part in research