

Adalimumab for eye (ocular) inflammation (uveitis)

Ophthalmology

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Information for Patients

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What is Adalimumab?

Adalimumab (AH-dah-lee-mu-mab) is a drug that can be helpful for people with the eye condition uveitis. It was not originally designed to treat this, but it can be given to patients who have this condition. It has proved to be useful in controlling the symptoms of their illness.

Please note: It is important that you read the manufacturer's leaflet as well. It will have general information about the drug you will need to know. Please remember that it is not written for patients with uveitis. Some of the information in it may not be relevant to you.

Why have I been given Adalimumab?

We have given you this drug to improve your eye condition. It is not a pain reliever. This means it does work rapidly. It will improve your symptoms over a longer period of time. If you are on painkillers or anti-inflammatory drugs, it is important that you should continue to take them unless your doctor advises you to stop.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

What does it look like?

Adalimumab (trade name Imraldi, Humira, Yuflyma) is available as a pre-filled pen or as a syringe.

How will it help me?

Adalimumab is an anti-TNF (anti-tumour necrosis factor) drug. It blocks the action of TNF proteins and so reduces inflammation.

Adalimumab can help to relieve your symptoms. If you respond to Adalimumab you will see an improvement in symptoms in 2 to 12 weeks.

How is it taken?

The usual dose is 40mg. You take this once every 2 weeks. You take it as an injection.

You, your partner or another member of your family can learn to give the injections. Most patients learn to self-administer. Patients find the pre-filled pen easiest to use.

This medicine should be kept in the fridge (2°C to 8°C). Do not freeze. Keep the pre-filled syringe or pre-filled pen in the outer packaging to protect from light.

Are there any side effects?

All drugs can cause side-effects. Most patients do not have any. The most common side-effects are reactions at the injection site such as redness, swelling or pain. These are not usually serious.

This medication can lower the blood cells that help your body fight infection. This is rare. You will have regular blood test to check for this. Tell your doctor straight away if you develop any signs of infection or any new symptoms whilst using adalimumab and for up to 6 months after stopping.

Please tell your doctor or specialist nurse straight away if you develop any of the following after starting Adalimumab:

- sore throat,
- fever,
- any signs of infection (redness/swelling/pain),
- chills (cold shakes, shivering),

- unexplained bleeding or bruising,
- cough,
- vomiting,
- diarrhoea,
- night sweats, fatigue,
- weight loss,
- stinging when you urinate or blood in your pee,
- any new symptoms or anything else that concerns you.

What are the risks?

There may be a slightly increased risk of certain types of cancer in patients using such drugs. This link has not been proven but is currently being researched. Please talk about this with your doctor if you are worried.

Please note: It is very important for you to attend your regular blood tests. This is how we can see if you have any side effects.

You must not continue to use Adalimumab unless you are having regular checks.

Try to avoid spending too much time in the sun (including sunbeds) whilst taking this medicine. Use a sunscreen with a high protection factor such as SPF 50.

Adalimumab can very rarely cause side effects which affect your ability to drive. You may get room spinning sensations (vertigo) and visual disturbances. If this happens to you, do not drive or operate machinery.

Can I take other medicines along with Adalimumab?

Some drugs may interact with Adalimumab. You should tell any doctor treating you that you are using Adalimumab. Please speak to your doctor or pharmacist before buying or taking any 'over-the-counter' preparations or any new medicine.

If you need a vaccine (immunisation), you must tell your GP that you are on this medication. Some 'live' vaccines should not be given to patients on Adalimumab.

Do not take these vaccines:

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| • Oral polio | • BCG (Tuberculosis) |
| • MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) | • Oral typhoid |
| • Yellow fever | • Chicken Pox (Varicella) |

The following immunisations are not 'live' and can be given. They may be less effective whilst you are on this drug.

You can take these vaccines:

- Hepatitis,
- Flu (influenza),
- Absorbed diphtheria (low dose) and tetanus vaccines for adults and adolescents.
- Pneumococcal vaccine. It is recommended you have a Pneumovax (pneumococcal) vaccine 6 weeks before starting adalimumab. Please speak to your doctor or specialist nurse about this.
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenza b),
- Typhoid injection,
- Meningococcal vaccines,

Can I start a family whilst on Adalimumab?

We suggest you talk about your medications with your doctor if you:

- are planning to try for a baby,
- become pregnant,
- are thinking of breastfeeding.

There is no evidence to suggest that Adalimumab reduces fertility in a men or women. If you are a woman planning to try for a baby please talk about this with your doctor as there are some risks including a higher risk of infection for your baby.

Adalimumab used in later pregnancy (3rd trimester) may sometimes affect the baby's immune system for several months after birth. You should not take live vaccines during this time. This means that the baby cannot be vaccinated against rotavirus (as this needs to be completed by 4 months). If they need the BCG vaccine this will also need to be delayed until they are at least 6 months old.

Is there anything else I should know about Adalimumab?

You should avoid contact with anyone who has chicken pox or shingles. Do this especially if you have never had these infections. If you do develop either, get medical advice right away.

It is recommended that you carry a biological therapy alert card which you should get before starting Adalimumab from your doctor or specialist nurse. If you then become unwell, anyone treating you will know you are on Adalimumab.

- Please inform the hospital if you are unable to attend your clinic appointment so they can make another arrangement for you.
- Make sure you have enough tablets to last you until your next appointment.

If you have any surgery or dentist appointments whilst using this medicine you should let your surgeon or dentist or know before your appointment.

Food preparation

There are some reports of bacteria (germs) found in food that may cause a problem to those who are less able to fight infections. Your body's resistance to infection can be reduced while you are taking Aalimumab.

To help with this you should:

- Cook meat thoroughly. You should avoid raw seafood such as oysters and sushi.
- Make sure salads are washed well with hot water and avoid ready-prepared supermarket salads.
- Do not eat unpasteurized dairy products like brie, camembert.

Can I drink alcohol while taking Adalimumab?

You can drink alcohol. We advise you not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol per week. Spread this evenly over 3 or more days, on a regular basis.

What happens if I miss a dose?

Give the missed injection as soon as you remember. Do not inject more often than every 2 weeks. If you are concerned contact your doctor or specialist nurse.

Try to keep to a regular injection schedule to minimise missing doses.



Important things to remember:

- Keep all medicines out of children's reach.
- Take your medicine as prescribed. Do not stop or change the dose unless your doctor tells you to.
- Do not give your medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.
- Make sure you attend your follow-up hospital appointments even when you feel well and your symptoms are under control.

Who should I contact if I have any concerns?

If you have any concerns or questions about this treatment you can contact:

- **Uveitis Nurse Specialist:** 0793 997 8826 / 0748 499 1154
- **Eye Casualty Department:** 0116 258 6273
- **Ophthalmology Secretary:** 0116 258 6198

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