



Pertuzumab (Perjeta®)

Pertuzumab uses a targeted approach to treat breast cancer involving monoclonal antibodies. This treatment targets the protein Her2 which is found on the surface of some cancer cells. The aim of the treatment is to stop the cancer growing or slow it down.

Your treatment

Pertuzumab is given into the vein (intravenously) through a fine tube (cannula) as an infusion over 1 hour.

Subsequent cycles can be given over 30 to 60 minutes

Treatment is given over 3 weeks.

You will have a routine blood test before the start of each cycle of treatment.

This treatment can have serious or possibly life-threatening side effects. It is very important that you report side effects straight away. Don't delay, if you feel unwell, please ring The Christie Hotline on 0161 446 3658. The lines are open 24 hours a day.

Increased risk of serious infection

You are vulnerable to infection while you are having chemotherapy. Minor infections can become life-threatening in a matter of hours if left untreated. Symptoms of infection include fever, shivering, sweats, sore throat, diarrhoea, discomfort when you pass urine, cough or breathlessness. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer so you can check your temperature. You can buy one from your local chemist.

If you feel unwell, you have symptoms of an infection or your temperature is 37.5°C or above or below 36°C contact The Christie Hotline straight away.

Possible side effects

Chemotherapy can cause many different side effects. Some are more likely to occur than others. Everyone is different and not everyone gets all the side effects. Most side effects are usually temporary, but in some rare cases they can be life-threatening. It is important to tell your hospital doctor or nurse about any side effects so they can be monitored and, where possible, treated.

Common side effects (more than 1 in 10)



- **Anaemia (low number of red blood cells)**

While having this treatment you may become anaemic. This may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. You may need a blood transfusion.



- **Bruising or bleeding**

This treatment can reduce the production of platelets which help the blood clot. Let your doctor know if you have any unexplained bruising or bleeding, such as nosebleeds, bloodspots or rashes on the skin, and bleeding gums. You may need a platelet transfusion.

- **Reactions**

Less commonly, people may experience an allergic reaction with the first or second cycle. This may involve a headache, dizziness, rash or breathlessness. If any of these symptoms occur, call your nurse immediately. These symptoms are usually mild and temporary.

- **Lethargy**

Some chemotherapy may make you feel tired and lacking in energy. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. You may benefit from additional support during your treatment. Complementary therapies may be helpful. Speak to your nurse or doctor for further information. If necessary, take time off work. Gentle exercise, such as walking, can be beneficial.

- **Skin changes**

You may develop a rash similar to acne on your face/neck/trunk or your skin may be dry and itchy. Please tell your doctor or nurse.



- **Diarrhoea**

If this becomes a problem while you are having treatment, contact The Christie Hotline for advice. **If you develop severe diarrhoea it is important to contact this hospital straightaway as this may be a sign of a serious infection. Don't delay!**

- **Joint and muscle pain**

Pain in the joints (also called arthralgia) or muscles (also called myalgia) can be a temporary side effect while having pertuzumab. It is important to tell your doctor or nurse about this, so that appropriate painkillers can be prescribed.

- **Sore mouth**

Your mouth may become sore or dry, or you may notice small mouth ulcers during this treatment. Drinking plenty of fluids and cleaning your teeth regularly and gently with a soft toothbrush can help to reduce the risk of this happening. We can prescribe a mouthwash for you to use during treatment. You can dilute this with water if your mouth is sore. For ask your doctor or nurse for further advice. There is also general mouth care information in the chemotherapy booklet. If you continue to have a sore mouth, please contact The Christie Hotline.

- **Nausea and vomiting (sickness)**

The severity of this varies from person to person. Anti-sickness medication may be given along with your chemotherapy to prevent this. You will be given anti-sickness tablets to take at home. If you continue to feel or be sick, contact your GP or this hospital, because your anti-sickness medication may need to be changed or increased.

- **Constipation**

Try to drink plenty of fluids and eat foods high in fibre. Report this to your hospital doctor who may prescribe a suitable laxative. Ask the staff for a copy of Eating: Help Yourself which has useful ideas about diet when you are having treatment.

Uncommon side effects (less than 1 in 10)

- **Effects on the heart**

Pertuzumab can sometimes affect your heart function. If you experience any unusual shortness of breath, swelling of your ankles or a rapid heartbeat, please contact The Christie Hotline immediately.

- **Hair thinning**

You will not usually lose your hair with this chemotherapy but some people do have some thinning of their hair. Please remember that this is a temporary side effect and your hair will grow back normally when your treatment is completed. If you would like an appointment with the wig service, this can be arranged for you by visiting the Cancer information centre (department 7). A selection of headscarves and turbans is available from 'Headstart'.

Serious and potentially life threatening side effects

In a small proportion of patients chemotherapy can result in very severe side effects which may rarely result in death. The team caring for you will discuss the risk of these side effects with you.

Contraception

We recommend that you use a form of contraception to avoid pregnancy throughout pertuzumab treatment and up to 6 months after your last dose of pertuzumab. If you suspect you may be pregnant please contact the hospital immediately.

Late side effects

Some side effects may become evident only after a number of years. In reaching any decision with you about treatment, the potential benefit you receive from treatment will be weighed against the risks of serious long term side effects to the heart, lungs, kidneys and bone marrow. With some drugs there is also a small but definite risk of developing another cancer. If any of these problems specifically applies to you, the doctor will discuss these with you and note this on your consent form.

Contacts

If you have any general questions or concerns about your treatment, please ring the area where you are having treatment:

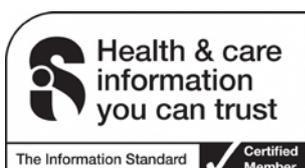
- Administration enquiries 0161 918 7606/7610
- Chemotherapy nurse: 0161 918 7171
- Clinical trials unit 0161 918 7663
- Breast care nurses 0161 446 3996

For advice ring The Christie Hotline on 0161 446 3658 (24 hours)

Your consultant is:

Your hospital number is:

Your key worker is:



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Details of the sources used are available, please contact Patient.Information@christie.nhs.uk