

## Obinutuzumab (lymphoma)

This leaflet is offered as a guide to you and your family. The possible benefits of this treatment vary: for some people, this immune therapy may reduce the risk of the cancer coming back, for others, it may control the cancer and its symptoms. Your treatment will be fully explained by your doctor or nurse who will be happy to answer any questions.

### Your treatment

Your doctor or nurse clinician has prescribed for you an immune treatment called Obinutuzumab. The treatment can be given in a number of ways including on its own or in combination with chemotherapy as part of your lymphoma treatment. The treatment consists of the following:

Day 1 of each cycle Obinutuzumab is given via an infusion (drip) over a few hours. Each cycle lasts either 21 or 28 days, depending upon whether it is given in combination with chemotherapy treatment.

For the first cycle only, when given in combination with chemotherapy, it is also given on day 8 and day 15.

Obinutuzumab via infusion (drip) over a few hours.

You will have a routine blood test and medical review before the start of each cycle of treatment. This is so your team can monitor and manage any side effects as well as assess your response to treatment. Occasionally we may not be able to go ahead with your treatment because your blood counts may not be at a safe level. If this happens your chemotherapy may be delayed a week.

Before you have your treatment with Obinutuzumab, you will be given 2 paracetamol tablets and intravenous anti-histamine injection. These can help to prevent any immediate allergic reactions.

### If you are taking any other medicines...

It is important to tell the doctor if you are taking medicine for any other condition such as high blood pressure. Some medicines can react with Obinutuzumab (either weakening or strengthening the effect), so always tell your doctor about any other medicines or tablets you are taking.

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 treatment. 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

Obinutuzumab 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. The side effects listed below relate to treatment with Obinutuzumab alone. If you are having Obinutuzumab in combination with chemotherapy, we will give you information about possible side effects of the chemotherapy drugs you are having in a separate information leaflet.

## Common side effects (more than 1 in 10)

### • Infusion related reactions

The side effects of Obinutuzumab can commonly occur while you are having the infusion including chills, fever and shivering. If you have any of these side effects please tell your nurse straightaway. However, you will be monitored regularly.

Rarely, you may also develop a headache or sickness. If this happens or you notice any swelling around the eyes and face, feel dizzy or faint, or have any shortness of breath during the infusion, please tell the nurse or doctor immediately. This may be an allergic reaction and they may need to slow down or stop the drip. You may feel tired and have a headache: these symptoms are related to your treatment and usually go when the infusion has finished. If you do not have any reactions to your first treatment, we may be able to give you subsequent infusions over a shorter period of time.

### • Fatigue (tiredness)

This treatment may make you feel tired and lacking in energy. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. If you do feel tired, take rest and get help with household chores. If necessary, take time off work. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial.

### • 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, bleeding gums or blood in your urine or stools. You may need a platelet transfusion.

### • Changes to kidney and bladder function

Obinutuzumab can cause changes to your kidney function. Your kidney function will be monitored with your routine blood tests. Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. You may also experience changes to your bladder function. Tell your doctor or nurse if you notice any changes to the frequency you pass urine, if you notice any blood in your urine or you have any urinary incontinence.

- **Upset bowels**

You may get upset bowels with this treatment:

**Diarrhoea:** If you experience diarrhoea contact The Christie Hotline for advice as you may have an infection. If you don't have an infection and diarrhoea becomes a problem while you are having treatment, anti-diarrhoea tablets can be bought from a pharmacy or prescribed by your GP for a temporary period until this is resolved.

**Constipation:** Some anti-sickness tablets can cause 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 infections**

Obinutuzumab causes immune suppression and can increase the risk of uncommon or unusual infections such as chest infections and bladder infections. Your doctor will discuss this side effect before you start treatment.

- **Hair loss**

The hair on your head could become thinner or you may gradually lose your hair. Please remember that this is a temporary side effect and your hair will grow back when your treatment is completed. Very rarely, hair loss can be permanent. If you would like an appointment with the wig service, this can be arranged for you by visiting the cancer information centre, or call **0161 446 8100**. Ask the staff for a copy of the 'Wig fitting service'. The Maggie's centre runs a head care workshop. Contact Maggie's on **0161 641 4848** or email [manchester@maggiescentres.org](mailto:manchester@maggiescentres.org) to arrange an appointment.

## Uncommon side effects (less than 1 in 10)

- **Tumour lysis syndrome**

This treatment may cause the rapid breakdown of lymphoma cells, which may lead to abnormalities in the blood called tumour lysis syndrome. This problem is more likely if you have a lot of disease or if your kidneys do not work as well as they should do. Your doctor will tell you if you are at risk. You may be given a kidney-protective medicine called allopurinol for the first cycle of treatment, and your doctor may do additional blood tests to monitor this side effect. We sometimes admit patients for the first treatment to give intravenous fluids and kidney-protective medication and twice daily monitoring of blood tests for 48 hours.

- **Mood changes**

Obinutuzumab can affect your mood. This may result in mood swings and irritability. You may also have difficulty in sleeping. If you experience this side effect and find it hard to tolerate you should discuss it with your nurse or doctor.

- **Skin**

Sometimes as a result of Obinutuzumab you may develop eczema. Ask your doctor for further advice, it may be necessary to use creams to help the discomfort.

- **Heart function**

Obinutuzumab may cause changes in the muscle of the heart, which can affect how the heart works. The effect on the heart depends on the dose given. It is unusual for the heart to be affected if you receive standard doses. Tests to see how well your heart is working will sometimes be carried out before the drug is given.

- **Eye irritation**

You may get a red eye or dry, gritty feeling in your eyes following treatment. If this happens, using hypromellose eye-drops available at any pharmacy, will help to ease the discomfort. If the problem persists contact this hospital. Your eyes may also water. This will improve in time and needs no specific treatment.

- **Lethargy/flu-like symptoms/fever**

Obinutuzumab may cause aching muscles and bones, occasionally high temperatures and night sweats. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. If you do feel tired, take rest when necessary. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial. Contact The Christie Hotline if you have a high temperature in order to assess whether this could be related to an infection.

- **Nose/throat irritation**

You may experience some nose and throat irritation, such as sore throat, runny nose and sinusitis. Please tell the doctor or nurse looking after you, they may be able to provide you with some medications that may help.

## **Rare side effects (less than 1 in 100)**

- **Irritation to the brain**

Obinutuzumab can cause irritation to the brain. You may notice some muscle weakness, visual changes, difficulties speaking or pins and needles or numbness. Sometimes people get very drowsy and sleepy or may have visual hallucinations. Please contact The Christie Hotline if you notice these symptoms. Your doctor or nurse can give you more information about this.

- **Hepatitis B**

You must tell your doctor at The Christie before starting Obinutuzumab if you have previously been diagnosed with Hepatitis B. Speak to your doctor if you wish to discuss this further.

- **Gastrointestinal perforation (Warning!)**

In very rare cases especially where the cancer affects the stomach or bowel Obinutuzumab has caused a hole called a perforation. If you develop sudden severe abdominal pain vomiting blood or notice blood in your stool please contact 999 without delay.

## **Serious and potentially life threatening side effects**

In a small proportion of patients, this treatment 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.

## **Sex, contraception & fertility**

**Protecting your partner and contraception:** We recommend that you or your partner use a condom during sexual intercourse while you are having the course of cancer treatment. Cancer treatment is dangerous to unborn babies and this will also protect you and your partner from any drugs that may be present in semen and in the vagina. If you suspect that you may be pregnant please tell your doctor immediately.

**Fertility:** This treatment may affect your ability to have children. Your doctor or nurse should have discussed this with you. If not, please ask them before you start treatment.

## 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 Obinutuzumab there is also a small but definite risk of developing another cancer, in particular a type of skin cancer called Squamous cell carcinoma. If any of these problems specifically apply 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:

- Haematology day unit **0161 446 3924**
- Lymphoma clinical nurse specialists **0161 446 8573**
- Lymphoma secretaries
  - 0161 446 3753** Professor Radford/Dr Linton
  - 0161 446 8574** Professor Illidge
  - 0161 446 3956** Dr Smith
  - 0161 446 3332** Professor Cowan/Dr Chan
  - 0161 446 3302** Dr Harris
  - 0161 446 3869** Dr Bloor
- Palatine Treatment Ward **0161 446 3960/3961** or **3925**
- General enquiries **0161 446 3000**
- For urgent advice ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours)

Your consultant is: .....

Your hospital number is: .....

Your key worker is: .....

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

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We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for  
urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

