

Daratumumab (Darzalex®)

The possible benefits of this treatment vary; for some people it may reduce the risk of the cancer coming back, for others it may control the cancer and its symptoms. Your doctor will explain to you whether you will receive chemotherapy or another type of treatment, or a combination of both. Your doctor or nurse will be happy to answer any questions you have about your treatment. You will find it useful to refer to the booklet 'Chemotherapy, a guide' which gives general information on chemotherapy and side effects.

Your treatment

Your doctor or nurse clinician has prescribed for you a treatment which includes Daratumumab (Darzalex).

Daratumumab is given as an infusion into a vein (intravenous). The first infusion may last up to 8 hours and the time of the infusion may be shortened or extended, depending on how well you tolerate the drug. You will be given pre-infusion medications to reduce the risk of an infusion related reaction.

Daratumumab is administered as a weekly infusion for 8 weeks, then 8 more treatments are given every other week.

From week 24, the infusions are then reduced to once every 4 weeks.

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



Possible side effects

This treatment can cause many different side effects. Some are more likely to occur than others. We are all different, so we may get different side effects with varying severity. 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.

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.

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.

You will have a routine blood test every day while you are in hospital to monitor the effects of the chemotherapy, but please tell your nurse if you experience any of the symptoms listed above.

• 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 may also be given anti-sickness tablets to take at home. If you continue to feel or be sick, contact your GP or The Christie, because your anti-sickness medication may need to be changed or increased.

• Diarrhoea

If this becomes a problem during or after your treatment, anti-diarrhoea tablets can be prescribed by your GP or hospital doctor. Ask the staff for a copy of The Christie booklet 'Eating - help yourself' which has some useful ideas about diet when you are having treatment.

• Aching or pain in joints or muscles

After having Daratumumab you may find that you experience muscle spasms or cramps. If this happens to you speak to your doctor who can prescribe medicines to help with this.

• Headaches

Daratumumab can cause headaches. Taking painkillers can help to relieve them. If you find that they persist, speak to your doctor.

• Peripheral neuropathy (tingling and numbness in toes or fingers)

Daratumumab can cause numbness or pins and needles in your fingers or toes, and muscle cramps and weakness in the legs. It is important to tell us if this happens as the dose of Daratumumab may need to be reduced or stopped. This is usually mild or temporary but can last for some time. However, it can become permanent, so please report these symptoms promptly to the myeloma nurse specialist or your doctor at The Christie.

• 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. If you do feel tired, take rest when necessary. Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial.

Symptoms of infusion related reactions (IRRs)

- Chills
- Sore throat, cough
- Itchy, runny or blocked nose
- Feeling short of breath or other breathing problems.

Contact The Christie Hotline immediately, day or night on 0161 446 3658, if you should experience any of the following symptoms:

Warning! Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher, chills (possible signs of infection)

The following symptoms require medical attention, but are not an emergency. Contact your health care provider within 24 hours of noticing any of the following:

- Nausea (interferes with ability to eat and unrelieved with prescribed medication)
- Vomiting (vomiting more than 4-5 times in a 24 hour period)
- Diarrhoea (4-6 episodes in a 24-hour period)
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Black or tarry stools, or blood in your stools
- Blood in the urine
- Pain or burning with urination
- Extreme fatigue (unable to carry on self-care activities)
- Mouth sores (painful redness, swelling or ulcers).

Sex, contraception and fertility

Protecting your partner and contraception: We recommend that you or your partner use a condom during sexual intercourse while you are having this treatment, and for at least 3 months after the last dose of daratumumab. Chemotherapy is dangerous to unborn babies and this will also protect you and your partner from any chemotherapy 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 chemotherapy 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 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 contact the Haematology team.

Anne-Marie Kelly or Emma Whitham - **0161 446 8167**
Haematology nurse specialists

Haematology and transplant day unit - **0161 446 3924**

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:

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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.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. 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