

my holiday
my family
Remicade
my friends

This booklet is not a substitute for the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) which is provided with your medicine - please ensure you read this. The PIL is also available at www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine. The information provided in this booklet is general educational information and does not take the place of professional medical advice. Always follow your doctor/nurse's instructions and talk with him/her about any questions or problems you have regarding your health and treatment.

Understanding how your Remicade (infliximab) treatment fits into your life.



A PATIENT'S GUIDE TO REMICADE (INFLIXIMAB).
TO BE GIVEN TO PATIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN
PRESCRIBED REMICADE (INFLIXIMAB)

A patient's guide to Remicade (infliximab)

This booklet is intended for adult patients who have been prescribed Remicade (infliximab), and is not a substitute for the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) which is provided with your medicine - please read this. The PIL is also available at www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine. The information provided in this booklet is general education information and does not take the place of professional medical advice.



Your treatment

Your doctor has decided that a change needs to be made to your treatment plan. This could be because your medicines were not helping you enough. For example, you might have had symptoms or “flares” despite treatment. Another reason for the change might be that your medicines were causing side-effects that were difficult for you to cope with.

Either way, you will soon begin treatment with Remicade, also known as infliximab, a type of medicine called a “biologic”. The good news is that your doctor thinks that Remicade (infliximab) might help.

Why have I been prescribed Remicade (infliximab)?

Remicade (infliximab) belongs to a group of medicines called ‘TNF blockers’. It is used in adults for the following inflammatory diseases:

- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Psoriatic arthritis
- Ankylosing spondylitis
- Psoriasis.

Remicade is also used in adults and children 6 years of age or older for:

- Crohn's disease
- Ulcerative colitis.

How does Remicade (infliximab) work?

Your immune system naturally produces a protein called tumour necrosis factor alpha (TNF-alpha). When your body produces too much TNF-alpha this can lead to inflammation and the other symptoms of your condition. Remicade (infliximab) is an anti-TNF. This means that it works by blocking TNF-alpha to reduce the inflammation in your body.

Before you start treatment

Before you start treatment with Remicade (infliximab), your healthcare professional will need to ask you a few questions about your health. This is to make sure you don't have any other conditions which might stop you receiving treatment and to involve you in the decision making process.

Doing this doesn't necessarily mean that you can't have Remicade (infliximab), but having as much information as possible will help your healthcare professional to plan your treatment.

Also, you will be weighed and you may need to have some screening tests. These may include:

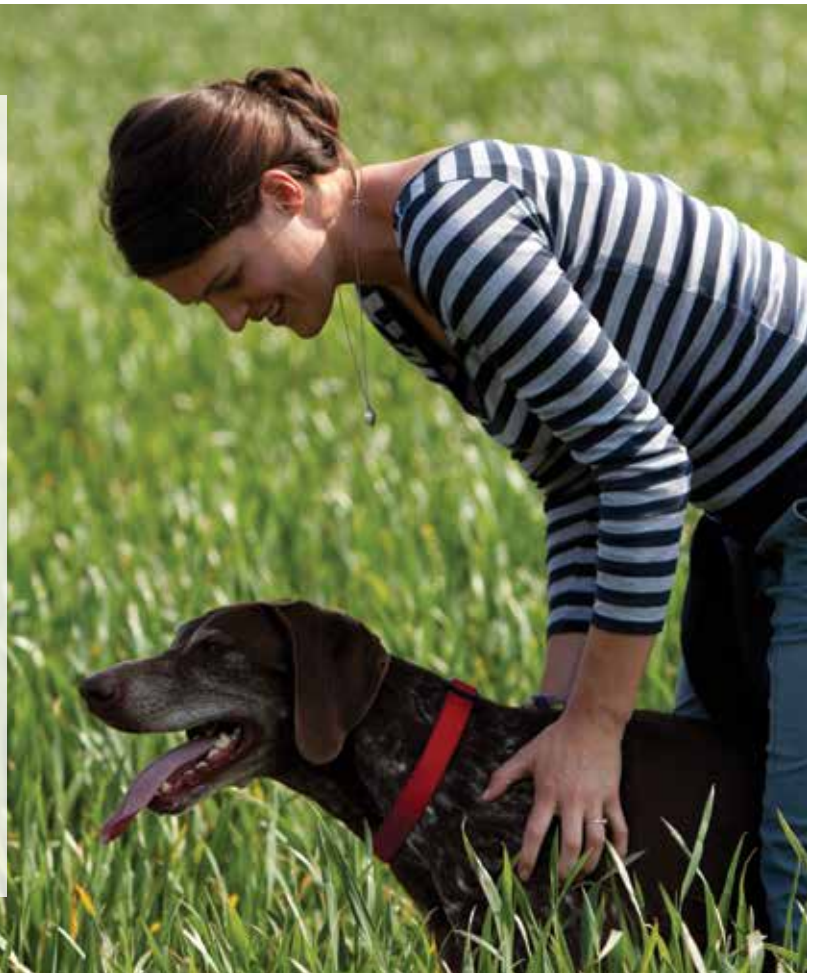
- Tests on your blood: The healthcare professional might do some blood tests to find out whether you have any infections

- Tests for tuberculosis (TB), which may include a chest X-ray: Some people may have been exposed to TB without knowing it. Remicade (infliximab) should not be given to people with TB, so if you have TB or your doctors feels that you are at risk of TB, you may be treated with medicines for TB before you start your treatment.

Before starting treatment you should tell your doctor if:

- if you have received infliximab in the past
- you are allergic to infliximab or to any of the other ingredients in Remicade
- you are allergic (hypersensitive) to proteins that come from mice
- if you have an infection
- if you are a carrier or if you have or have had hepatitis B
- if you have any heart problems, such as mild heart failure
- if you have or have ever had lymphoma (a type of blood cancer) or any other cancer
- if you have a lung disease called Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) or if you are a heavy smoker
- if you have or have ever had a problem that affects your nervous system
- if you have any abnormal skin openings (fistulae)
- if you recently have had or are due to have a vaccine
- if you are going to have any operations or dental procedures

TELL YOUR
HEALTHCARE
PROFESSIONAL
IF YOU HAVE
BEEN FEELING
UNWELL
BEFORE YOU
RECEIVE YOUR
TREATMENT



What happens next?

Your first treatment

Going for a new treatment for the first time can make you feel nervous, but you shouldn't worry. Your hospital is staffed by experienced nurses, who will guide you through each step of the treatment and who can answer any questions you may have.

Future treatments

After the first treatment, you will receive another treatment after 2 weeks, and one more 4 weeks later. After these three treatments (called the "induction" phase), you are likely to have Remicade (infliximab) treatment once every 6-8 weeks depending on your disease.

VISITING THE HOSPITAL FOR YOUR REMICADE (INFLIXIMAB) TREATMENT



Before you attend hospital for your treatment, it is important to let your healthcare professional know if you feel unwell. They may need to move your treatment to a later date. It's also a good idea to arrive promptly for your first treatment, so that there's enough time for your assessment.



Before your treatment can begin, your healthcare professional will need to do a health check. They may ask you how you are feeling and what tests you have had. They may also check your pulse, blood pressure and temperature.



Next a nurse will set up the equipment. Once you are comfortable, a cannula (a small, flexible plastic tube) will be placed in one of your veins (usually in the arm). You might feel a slight pinch at first, but usually nothing more than that. Then, the drip will be attached to the cannula, and the treatment will begin.



During the treatment you may eat, drink, visit the toilet, work, read, talk to other patients, ask the nurse any questions you might have, or just relax. After the treatment you will need to stay in the hospital for at least an hour, to make sure that you feel fine. Then you will be free to get on with your day.

What to expect from treatment

Some patients feel much better and stay well on Remicade (infliximab). However, everyone is different, so there's no guarantee that Remicade (infliximab) will work for you. If treatment does work for you, you may get symptom relief after the first few weeks.

The future

Your disease and treatment will be reviewed regularly with your healthcare professional. Your healthcare professional may decide to stop treatment with Remicade (infliximab) if it stops working or is giving you side effects, or if your doctor decides you don't need it any more.



What you need to know about possible side effects

As with all medicines, you might experience side effects with Remicade (infliximab). Some of these might happen during treatment, and some in between your treatments. It is important to know what the possible side effects are, so that if you do experience any you can let your healthcare professional know.

Reporting of side effects:

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at

www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard. By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

Contact your healthcare professional urgently if you notice any of the following:

- signs of a lung problem such as coughing, breathing difficulties or tightness in the chest
 - signs of a nervous system problem (including eye problems) such as fits, tingling or numbness in any part of your body, weakness in arms or legs, changes in eyesight such as double vision or other eye problems.
 - signs of an Immune system disorder such as joint pain, rash on cheeks or arms that is sensitive to the sun (lupus) cough, shortness of breath, fever, skin rash (sarcoidosis)
 - signs of a low blood count such as persistent fever, bleeding or bruising more easily, looking pale, small red or purple spots caused by bleeding under the skin
 - signs of Cancer such as swelling of lymph nodes, weight loss, fever, unusual skin nodules, changes in moles or skin colouring, unusual vaginal bleeding
- symptoms of an allergic reaction such as swelling of the face, lips, mouth or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing, skin rash, hives (bumps on the skin), swelling of the hands, feet or ankles
 - signs of Infection (including TB) such as fever, tiredness, cough which may be persistent, shortness of breath, flu-like symptoms, weight loss, night sweats, diarrhoea, wounds, dental problems, burning feeling when urinating, collection of pus in the gut or around the anus (abscess)
 - symptoms of a heart problem such as pain in the chest, arm or stomach, shortness of breath, fainting or feeling dizzy or light-headed, fluttering or pounding in your chest, a fast or a slow heartbeat, swelling of your feet, anxiety, sweating, nausea, vomiting,
 - Liver problems such as, yellowing of skin and eyes, dark brown coloured urine, right-sided abdominal pain or swelling, fever, feeling sick or being sick, feeling very tired, joint pain, skin rashes

Some of the side effects seen with Remicade (infliximab) are listed overleaf. Please also refer to the Patient Information Leaflet.

**YOU SHOULD LET YOUR
HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL
KNOW IF YOU ARE FEELING
UNWELL OR IF YOU START TO
FEEL UNWELL WHILE TAKING
REMICADE (infliximab)**



Common side effects

- Increased risk of infections
 - Pain in the joints, muscles or back
 - Reactions where the drip enters your arm such as pain, swelling, redness or itching
 - Changes in blood tests, including a fall in number of red or white cells, or both and an increase in liver enzymes
 - Changes in blood pressure or heart rate (this will be monitored during your treatment)
 - Headache
 - Eye problems, including red eyes and infections
 - Feeling tired or weak
 - Stomach pain, feeling sick, diarrhoea, indigestion, heartburn, constipation
 - Changes in sensation such as feeling dizzy, numb, tingling and balance problems
 - Having problems sleeping, depression
 - Skin problems such as dry skin, rash, eczema, psoriasis and hair loss
- Difficult or painful breathing, chest pain
 - Bleeding in the stomach or intestines
 - Fever, increased sweating, hot flush, warm, bruising, nosebleed, chills
 - Swollen lymph nodes

Rarely, some patients treated with Remicade (infliximab) have developed certain kinds of skin cancer, therefore you should have your skin examined from time to time. Please inform your doctor if you notice any changes in the appearance of the skin or growths on the skin during or after therapy

Please refer to the Patient Information Leaflet for further information on side effects.

Your Patient Reminder card contains important safety information. This should be read and carried with you and shown to any healthcare professional who is involved in your care. Please ask your healthcare professional for an reminder card if you do not have one.

Frequently asked questions

What effect will Remicade (infliximab) have on my other medications?

It is important to tell your healthcare professional if you are taking other medications, this includes non-prescription drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements. Before starting treatment, your healthcare professional will check your current medicines. You should not take Remicade (infliximab) with medicines containing the active substance anakinra or abatacept. Also, be sure your healthcare professional knows if you're taking other medications that affect your immune system. If you see another doctor, nurse or dentist after you have started Remicade (infliximab), tell them that you are receiving this medicine.

What about Diet, Exercise and lifestyle choices?

Your healthcare professional is the best person to talk to regarding the diet and forms of exercise that best suit your condition. They will also be able to provide advice on smoking cessation and drinking. In addition, the patient support groups listed at the end of this leaflet can be a helpful source of information.

Can I take antibiotics while on Remicade (infliximab)?


Yes, but please make sure that the healthcare professional is aware that you are also receiving infliximab.

Can I have vaccinations while on Remicade (infliximab)?

You should not receive certain vaccines while using Remicade (infliximab). Talk to your doctor if you recently have had or are due to have a vaccine.

Can I go on holiday while on Remicade (infliximab)?

Yes, but it probably makes the most sense to travel in between your treatments. Talk to your healthcare professional about your travel plans before you go.



If you have any
questions or
concerns contact
your healthcare
professional

Can I drive while on

Remicade (infliximab)? Remicade is not likely to affect your ability to drive or use tools or machines. If you feel tired or unwell after having Remicade, do not drive or use any tools or machines. You may wish to have someone drive you home after your first treatment. If you have no problems during and after your first treatment, you should be able to drive after future treatments. Check your insurance policy to make sure you are covered if you drive immediately after treatment.

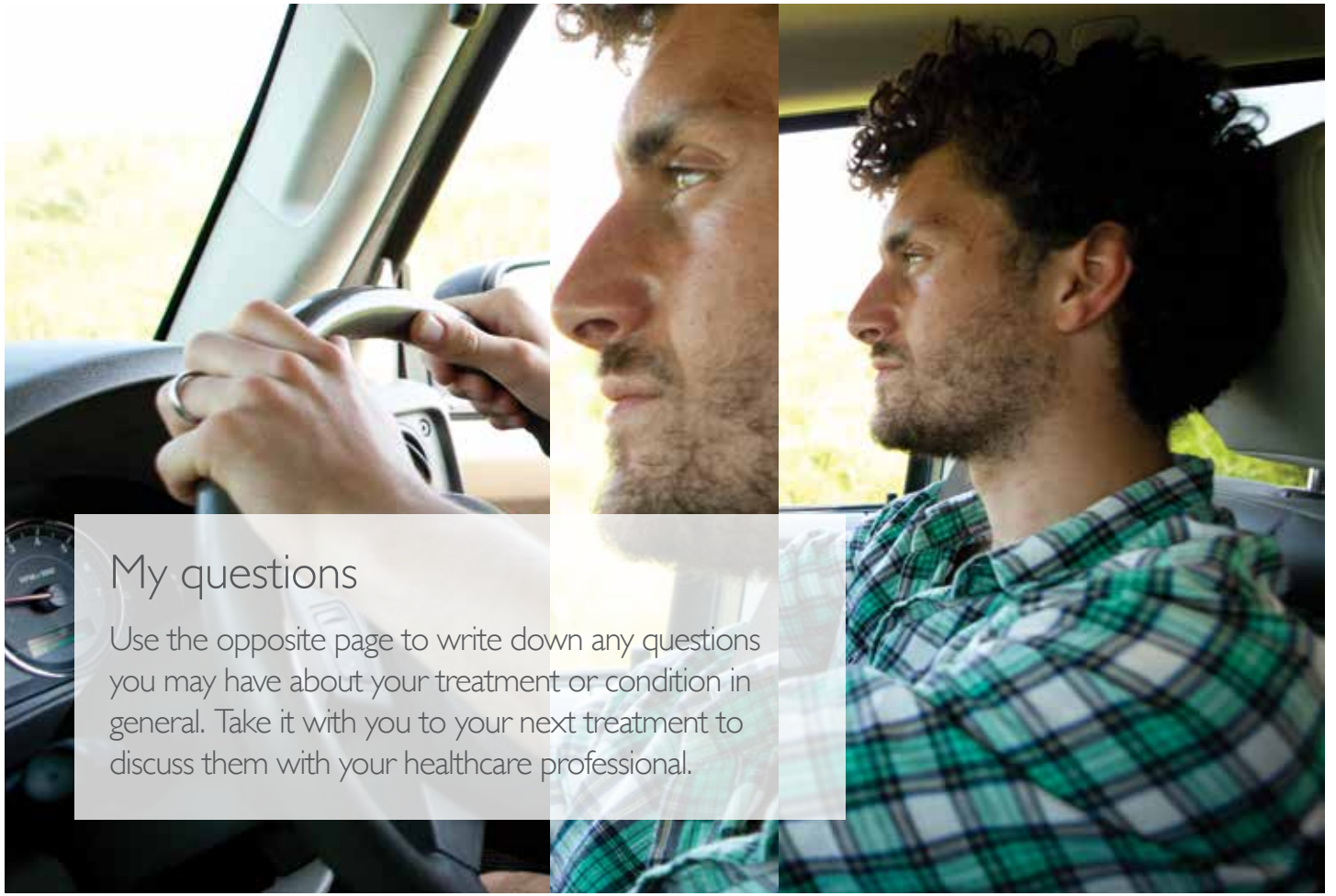
Do I need to use contraception while on Remicade (infliximab)?

Yes, you should avoid getting pregnant when you are being treated with Remicade (infliximab) and for 6 months after you stop being treated with it. You should therefore discuss the use of contraception during this time with your doctor. If you are planning to start a family during or soon after your treatment, you should speak to your healthcare professional in advance.

Can I breastfeed while on Remicade (infliximab)?

Do not breastfeed during Remicade (infliximab) treatment, and for 6 months after stopping treatment.





My questions

Use the opposite page to write down any questions you may have about your treatment or condition in general. Take it with you to your next treatment to discuss them with your healthcare professional.

For more support

See the Remicade patient website
using the URL provided below



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Patient support groups

The following patient support websites may be a helpful source of information:

Inflammatory arthritis

National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society

www.nras.org.uk

Helpline: 0800 298 7650

Arthritis Care

www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Helpline: 0808-800 4050

National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society

www.nass.co.uk

Helpline: 020 8741 1515

Inflammatory bowel disease

Crohn's and Colitis UK

www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Helpline: 0300 222 5700

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