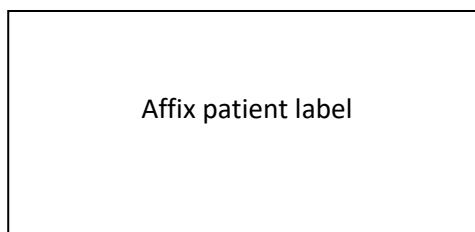


**DEPARTMENT OF RENAL MEDICINE
RITUXIMAB (TRUXIMA) GP INFORMATION LEAFLET**

Date:

Dear Dr,



Your patient has been commenced on Rituximab (Truxima).

What is Rituximab (Truxima) and how does it work?

Rituximab (Truxima) is a monoclonal antibody which causes depletion of B lymphocytes. It is licensed for use in Granulomatosis with polyangiitis and microscopic polyangiitis but may also be used off license for other indications such as lupus nephritis and membranous nephropathy. Over half a million patients worldwide have received rituximab and serious side-effects have been rare. For the great majority of patients, rituximab is safe and well-tolerated.

What is the dosage?

Rituximab is given intravenously at Raigmore, Caithness General, Belford or Western Isles infusion suites. Dosing and frequency are dependent on indication and response, but a dose of 1000mg repeated after two weeks is commonly used as a loading dose, followed by 500-1000mg as maintenance every six months. Patients will be reviewed regularly by a Consultant Nephrologist and may require repeated doses. Requests for blood tests will be organised by the renal team.

Patients may be immunosuppressed for up to one year following a dose of rituximab. Please could we request that rituximab be added to the patient's primary care medication record to raise awareness that they are prescribed an immunosuppressant via the hospital.

PJP prophylaxis

For some patients we may request you to prescribe co-trimoxazole 480mg daily as prophylaxis against PJP. Please refer to patient clinic letter for specific advice.

What are the side effects?

Patients may be immuno-suppressed following treatment and be more susceptible to infection. We will screen for viral hepatitis (Hepatitis B and C) and HIV prior to starting the treatment.

Warning – Document uncontrolled when printed	
Policy Reference: N/A	Date of Issue: October 2019
Prepared by: Kirsten McCulloch, Renal Pharmacist	Date of Review: October 2021
Lead Reviewer: Dr N Joss, Renal Consultant	Version: 1
Authorised by: N/A	Page 1 of 2

Renal Medicine
Raigmore Hospital
Old Perth Road
Inverness
Inverness-shire
IV2 3UJ
01463 704383
01463 704586



www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk

Very rarely, some patients taking rituximab have had a serious brain infection, known as Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML), which can be fatal. Please notify us if your patient has memory loss, trouble thinking, and difficulty with walking or loss of vision. For further information on adverse effects please refer to the SPC at medicines.org.uk.

Vaccination

We recommend patients be considered for annual influenza and pneumococcal vaccines, as indicated. Ideally, vaccination should be completed one month prior to commencing rituximab or seven months after as there is evidence of reduced efficacy with concomitant treatment. However, if this timescale is not possible we would still recommend they be given but beware the effect may be blunted.

Vaccination with live vaccines e.g. yellow fever, shingles, polio, and MMR is contraindicated in people on immunosuppressive therapy including rituximab.

Use in pregnancy and breastfeeding

Pregnancy and breastfeeding should be avoided and adequate contraception must be in place during and for at least a year after discontinuation of treatment **for both males and females**.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch should you have any queries.

Warning – Document uncontrolled when printed	
Policy Reference: N/A	Date of Issue: October 2019
Prepared by: Kirsten McCulloch, Renal Pharmacist	Date of Review: October 2021
Lead Reviewer: Dr N Joss, Renal Consultant	Version: 1
Authorised by: N/A	Page 2 of 2