

Medicine: tofacitinib (brand name: Xeljanz[®]) for ulcerative colitis

Pfizer Ltd

What is tofacitinib used for?

Tofacitinib was considered for use to treat ulcerative colitis, which is an inflammatory bowel disease affecting the large intestine. The condition causes the large intestine to become inflamed, and ulcers (large sores) develop on the lining of the intestine which can bleed and produce pus. Symptoms of active ulcerative colitis include bloody diarrhoea, stomach pain, increased frequency of bowel movements and weight loss. It is a long-term condition, with flare-ups of symptoms and then periods of remission (symptom-free periods).

How does tofacitinib work?

Tofacitinib works by blocking the actions of proteins (called janus kinases) which are involved in causing the inflammation in ulcerative colitis. By blocking them tofacitinib reduces the inflammation and symptoms of ulcerative colitis.

What has SMC said?

SMC has accepted tofacitinib for the treatment of adults with moderate to severe active ulcerative colitis, after other medicines have not worked well enough, have stopped working, or are not suitable.



Why has SMC said this?

SMC looks at how well new medicines work compared with current treatments available in Scotland and in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer (for example, if the medicine has to be given at a clinic or side effects have to be monitored).

SMC carefully considers every new medicine to make sure it benefits patients and is considered to be an acceptable use of the limited resources in NHSScotland. When SMC assesses a medicine it takes account of the needs of all patients in NHSScotland, not just those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Clinical trial and economic evidence from the company that makes the medicine.
- Advice from healthcare professionals about any benefits of the new medicine compared to current treatment, along with how the new medicine is likely to be used.
- Information from patient groups about the potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.

After careful consideration of the evidence, and after the company applied a confidential discount to the cost of the medicine, SMC was able to accept tofacitinib as a possible treatment within NHSScotland.

What does SMC's decision mean for me?

If your healthcare professional thinks that tofacitinib for use as described above is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland. For further information see:

Medicines in Scotland: What's the right treatment for me?

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/medicinesbooklet.aspx



More information

The organisation below can provide more information and support for people with ulcerative colitis and their families. SMC is not responsible for the content of any information provided by external organisations.

Crohn's and Colitis UK



<https://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk>



0300 222 5700

You can find out more about tofacitinib in the European public assessment report (EPAR) summary for the public by searching for the medicine name on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) website.



<http://www.ema.europa.eu>

Date advice published: 11 February 2019

SMC No: (SMC2122)