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Information for the public

Bevacizumab with gemcitabine and carboplatin for treating the first recurrence of platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer

NICE 'technology appraisal guidance' advises on when and how drugs and other treatments should be used in the NHS.

This document is about when **bevacizumab** should be used with drugs called gemcitabine and carboplatin to treat people with the first recurrence of platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer in the NHS in England and Wales. It explains guidance (advice) from NICE (the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). It is written for people with ovarian cancer but it may also be useful for their families or carers or for anyone with an interest in the condition.

It does not describe ovarian cancer or the treatments in detail – your specialist should discuss these with you. You can get more information from the organisations listed on page 4.

There are several possible treatments for advanced ovarian cancer. Your healthcare team should talk to you about the treatment options available.

What has NICE said?

NICE does not recommend bevacizumab given with gemcitabine and carboplatin for treating adults with the first recurrence of platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer (including fallopian tube or primary peritoneal cancer) that has not been previously treated with bevacizumab or other vascular endothelial growth factor inhibitors.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work, and also at how well they work in relation to how much they cost the NHS. NICE applies special considerations to treatments that can extend the lives of people who are nearing the end of their life. Bevacizumab does not provide enough benefit to patients to justify its high cost, and did not qualify for special consideration, so NICE did not recommend it.

Platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer

The ovaries are part of the female reproductive system and are found in the abdomen. Ovarian cancer can occur in the tissue covering the ovaries, in the tubes leading from the ovaries to the womb (the fallopian tubes) or in the membrane that lines the inside of the abdomen (primary peritoneal cancer). If the cancer has spread to other parts of the body, it is known as advanced. 'Platinum-sensitive' means that the cancer has relapsed more than 6 months after the last dose of chemotherapy drugs that contain platinum.

Bevacizumab

Bevacizumab (also known as Avastin) is a type of anticancer drug known as a vascular endothelial growth factor inhibitor. These stop new blood vessels forming in a tumour, which causes tumours to shrink or stop growing. For the first recurrence of advanced ovarian cancer that is sensitive to platinum treatment, bevacizumab is given with drugs called gemcitabine and carboplatin.

What does this mean for me?

Bevacizumab in combination with gemcitabine and carboplatin should not normally be prescribed on the NHS to treat the first recurrence of platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer. Your doctor should talk to you about other treatment options available to you.

NICE will decide whether to review this guidance in June 2016.

If you are already taking bevacizumab in combination with gemcitabine and carboplatin for the first recurrence of platinum-sensitive advanced ovarian cancer, you should be able to continue taking it until you and your specialist decide it is the right time to stop.

More information

The organisations below can provide more information and support for adults with ovarian cancer. NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

- CancerHelp UK, 0808 800 4040
www.cancerhelp.org.uk (the patient information website of Cancer Research UK)
- Macmillan Cancer Support, 0808 808 0000
www.macmillan.org.uk
- Ovarian Cancer Action, 0300 456 4700
www.ovarian.org.uk
- Ovacome – The Ovarian Cancer Support Network, 0800 008 7054
www.ovacome.org.uk
- Target Ovarian Cancer, 020 7923 5470
www.targetovariancancer.org.uk

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more. If you live in Wales you should speak to NHS Direct Wales for information on who to contact.

About NICE

NICE provides national guidance and advice to improve health and social care. The guidance is written by independent experts, including healthcare professionals and people representing patients and carers. They consider the evidence on the disease and treatments, the views of patients and carers and the experiences of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, and consider the costs involved. Staff working in the NHS are expected to follow this guidance.

To find out more about NICE, its work and how it reaches decisions, see www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance

This document and other versions of the guidance aimed at healthcare professionals are available at www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA285

The NICE website has a screen reader service called Browsealoud, which allows you to listen to our guidance. Click on [Accessibility](#) at the bottom of the NICE homepage to use this service.

We encourage NHS and voluntary organisations to use text from this document in their own information about ovarian cancer.

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