

# Pegaspargase for treating acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

Information for the public

Published: 28 September 2016

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

## What has NICE said?

Pegaspargase (Oncaspar) is recommended as a possible treatment for untreated, newly diagnosed acute lymphoblastic leukaemia.

### What does this mean for me?

If you have untreated, newly diagnosed acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, and your doctor thinks that pegaspargase is the right treatment, you should be able to have it on the NHS.

Pegaspargase should be available on the NHS within 3 months.

If you are not eligible for treatment as described above, you should be able to continue taking pegaspargase until you and your doctor decide it is the right time to stop.

### The condition and the treatment

Leukaemia is a type of cancer that affects white blood cells.

In people with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, stem cells inside the bone marrow (spongy material inside the bones) make too many white blood cells that aren't fully developed and don't work properly.

Symptoms include tiredness, unusual bleeding and frequent infections, which get worse as more under-developed white blood cells are made.

Treatments for acute lymphoblastic leukaemia include cell transplants and different types of drugs. Pegaspargase is a type of drug that helps to kill cancer cells.

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more.

These organisations can give you advice and support:

- [Leukaemia CARE](#), 08088 010 444
- [Bloodwise](#), 0207 504 2200
- [Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group](#), 0116 252 5858
- [Macmillan Cancer Support](#), 0808 808 0000
- [Cancer Research UK \(Patient information\)](#), 0808 800 4040

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ISBN: 978-1-4731-2083-9

## Accreditation

