

Tofacitinib for treating active ankylosing spondylitis

Information for the public

Published: 18 October 2023

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Tofacitinib (Xeljanz) is available on the NHS as a possible treatment for active ankylosing spondylitis in adults if:

- conventional treatments (physiotherapy followed by non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) have not worked well enough
- the condition has a Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index score of 4 units or more and a spinal visual analogue scale of 4 cm or more, and
- they cannot have tumour necrosis factor-alpha inhibitors, or these have not worked well enough.

Treatment with tofacitinib should be stopped after 16 weeks if it is not working well enough.

If you are not eligible for tofacitinib but are already having it, you should be able to continue until you and your doctor decide when best to stop.

Is this treatment right for me?

Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. See [our webpage on making decisions about your care](#).

Questions to think about

- How well does it work compared with other treatments?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- How will the treatment affect my day-to-day life?
- What happens if the treatment does not work?
- What happens if I do not want to have treatment? Are there other treatments available?

Information and support

The [NHS webpage on ankylosing spondylitis](#) may be a good place to find out more.

The [National Axial Spondyloarthritis Society](#) (020 8741 1515) can give you advice and support.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-5469-8