

Pertuzumab (Perjeta®)

Pertuzumab uses a targeted approach to treat breast cancer involving monoclonal antibodies. This treatment targets the protein Her2 which is found on the surface of some cancer cells. The aim of the treatment is to stop the cancer growing or slow it down.

Your treatment

Pertuzumab is given into the vein (intravenously) through a fine tube (cannula) as an infusion over 1 hour.

Subsequent cycles can be given over 30 to 60 minutes

Treatment is given over 3 weeks.

You will have a routine blood test before the start of each cycle of treatment. Occasionally we may not be able to go ahead with your treatment until your blood counts are back to a safe level. If this happens, your chemotherapy may be delayed a week.

You may be advised to have a line fitted to aid the delivery of your intravenous chemotherapy treatment. This will be organised by the clinic if it is required. **Your line needs to be removed after all your intravenous chemotherapy treatments have finished.** If you have not received an appointment for this please contact the procedure team on **0161 446 3916**.

This treatment can have serious or possibly life-threatening side effects. It is very important that you report side effects straight away. Don't delay, if you feel unwell, please ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658**. The lines are open 24 hours a day.

• Increased risk of serious infection

You are vulnerable to infection while you are having chemotherapy. Minor infections can become life-threatening in a matter of hours if left untreated. Symptoms of infection include fever, shivering, sweats, sore throat, diarrhoea, discomfort when you pass urine, cough or breathlessness. We recommend that you use a digital thermometer so you can check your temperature. You can buy one from your local chemist.

If you feel unwell, you have symptoms of an infection or your temperature is 37.5°C or above, or below 36°C contact The Christie Hotline straight away.



- **Anaemia (low number of red blood cells) (Warning!)**

While having this treatment you may become anaemic. This may make you feel tired and breathless. Let your doctor or nurse know if these symptoms are a problem. You may need a blood transfusion.

- **Bruising or bleeding (Warning!)**

This treatment can reduce the production of platelets which help the blood clot. Let your doctor know if you have any unexplained bruising or bleeding, such as nosebleeds, blood spots or rashes on the skin, and bleeding gums. You may need a platelet transfusion.

- **Reactions**

Less commonly, people may experience an allergic reaction with the first or second cycle. This may involve a headache, dizziness, rash or breathlessness. If any of these symptoms occur, call your nurse immediately. These symptoms are usually mild and temporary.

Common side effects

- **Lethargy**

Some chemotherapy may make you feel tired and lacking in energy. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to cope with routine tasks. You may benefit from additional support during your treatment. Complementary therapies may be helpful. Speak to your nurse or doctor for further information. If necessary, take time off work. Gentle exercise, such as walking, can be beneficial.

- **Skin changes**

You may develop a rash similar to acne on your face/neck/trunk or your skin may be dry and itchy. Please tell your doctor or nurse.

- **Diarrhoea (Warning!)**

If this becomes a problem at any point during your treatment, contact The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** for advice. **If you develop severe diarrhoea it is important to contact The Christie straightaway as this may be a sign of a serious infection. Don't delay!**

- **Joint and muscle pain**

Pain in the joints (also called arthralgia) or muscles (also called myalgia) can be a temporary side effect while having pertuzumab. It is important to tell your doctor or nurse about this, so that appropriate painkillers can be prescribed.

- **Sore mouth**

Your mouth may become sore or dry, or you may notice small mouth ulcers during this treatment. Drinking plenty of fluids and cleaning your teeth regularly and gently with a soft toothbrush can help to reduce the risk of this happening. We can prescribe a mouthwash for you to use during treatment. You can dilute this with water if your mouth is sore. For ask your doctor or nurse for further advice. There is also general mouth care information in the chemotherapy booklet. If you continue to have a sore mouth, contact The Christie Hotline.

- **Nausea and vomiting (sickness)**

The severity of this varies from person to person. Anti-sickness medication may be given along with your chemotherapy to prevent this. You will be given anti-sickness tablets to take at home. If you continue to feel or be sick, contact your GP or this hospital, because your anti-sickness medication may need to be changed or increased.

- **Constipation**

Try to drink plenty of fluids and eat foods high in fibre. Report this to your hospital doctor who may

prescribe a suitable laxative. Ask staff for a copy of Eating - help yourself which has useful ideas about diet when you are having treatment.

Uncommon side effects (less than 1 in 10)

• Effects on the heart

Pertuzumab can sometimes affect your heart function. If you experience any unusual shortness of breath, swelling of your ankles or a rapid heartbeat, please contact The Christie Hotline immediately.

• Hair thinning

You will not usually lose your hair with this targeted therapy, but some people do have some thinning of their hair. Please remember that this is a temporary side effect and your hair will grow back when your treatment is completed. Very rarely, hair loss may be permanent. If you would like an appointment with the wig service, this can be arranged for you by visiting the cancer information centre. It is a good idea to get your wig before you lose a lot of hair which you can then match to your natural colour. Ask the staff for a copy of the 'Wig fitting service at The Christie'.

The Maggie's Centre runs a Talking Heads hair loss support workshop for anyone who is anticipating or experiencing hair loss (both men and women). These sessions cover the practicalities of hair loss as well as offering support with its emotional impact. Contact Maggie's on **0161 641 4848** or email manchester@maggiescentres.org

Contraception

We recommend that you use a form of contraception to avoid pregnancy throughout pertuzumab treatment and up to 6 months after your last dose of pertuzumab. If you suspect you may be pregnant please contact the hospital immediately.

Late side effects

Some side effects may become evident only after a number of years. In reaching any decision with you about treatment, the potential benefit you receive from treatment will be weighed against the risks of serious long term side effects to the heart, lungs, kidneys and bone marrow. With some drugs there is also a small but definite risk of developing another cancer. If any of these problems specifically applies to you, the doctor will discuss these with you and note this on your consent form.

Contacts

If you have any general questions or concerns about your treatment, please ring the area where you are having treatment:

Administration enquiries - **0161 918 7606/7610**

Chemotherapy nurse - **0161 918 7171**

Clinical trials unit - **0161 918 7663**

Breast care nurses - **0161 446 3996**

For advice ring The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours)

Your consultant is:

Your hospital number is:

Your key worker is:

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If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

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We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

