



Information for
patients and
carers

Fremanezumab

Treatment for Migraines

What is a migraine?

Migraine is a common neurological condition characterised by repeated, severe throbbing headaches that can last for hours. Headaches are often accompanied by nausea and sensitivity to light and/or sound. A small proportion of people who have migraine experience an 'aura' - this can include disturbed vision (flashing lights or blurred vision) or less commonly tingling or difficulties with speech (dysphasia).

What treatments are available?

Current treatments for migraine include:

- Acute (abortive) treatments: these treatments aim to reverse, or at least stop, the progression of a migraine that has started and include analgesia (pain killers) or specific treatments known as triptans
- Preventive (prophylactic) treatments, for chronic migraines: these treatments aim to reduce how often migraines occur or the severity of migraine pain. Most current preventive medications were not developed to treat migraine but have been found to be helpful in clinical trials
- Antiemetic treatment to help with nausea
- Psychology treatments including mindfulness

What is Fremanezumab?

Fremanezumab or 'Ajovy' is a new medication designed to prevent migraine. It belongs to a group of drugs known as Calcitonin Gene-Related Peptide (CGRP) monoclonal antibodies (mAbs).

What are CGRP mAbs and how do they work?

CGRP is a small protein molecule found in nerve cells which is thought to play a significant role in migraine. CGRP has been shown to magnify the response of nerve cells when it binds to them. It also causes blood vessels to relax and widen. The role of CGRP mAbs is to block CGRP receptors on cells and therefore help to reduce/block pain.

Fremanezumab is a CGRP mAb which binds to CGRP and makes it less effective in the body.

Why have I been prescribed this medication?

Fremanezumab is licensed as a treatment for people with chronic migraine. It is offered to certain patients who:

- Have a diagnosis of chronic migraine.
- Have not responded to other migraine drugs.
- Have committed to completing a headache diary.

Are there any side effects?

Like all medications Fremanezumab can have side effects, although in clinical trials it was well tolerated. Common side effects include:

- Injection site reactions - these generally resolve over a period of 24-48 hours
- Rash, itching or swelling - this can occur up to a month following injection and seldom requires treatment
- Constipation - this may require treatment, please discuss this with the nurse if you are affected

- If you are taking blood thinning tablets or anticoagulants, you may bruise more than normal, if it causes you problems, please inform the dystonia team. Do not use Fremanezumab if you have any unusual bleeding at the site of injection

Who should not receive Fremanezumab?

You should not take this drug if:

- you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant soon or breastfeeding
- you cannot or fail to take part in assessment, monitoring and diary keeping
- you have had a stroke, heart attack or have vascular disease in the limbs
- If there is an infection at the injection site

How is it administered and used?

Fremanezumab is given as a monthly injection into the thigh, upper arm or abdomen. It is given on the same day every month. It is important that missed treatments are given as soon as possible. You will be shown how to give this injection by the nurse at your clinic appointment.

If you feel you will struggle to administer this yourself, please talk to your nurse or doctor. You will be referred to a home care company who will supply you with Fremanezumab each month, ready to be administered. They will also supply you with a sharps bin to dispose of used needles. Fremanezumab needs to be stored in the fridge prior to administration.

You will need to store your injections in a fridge. If you have young children, please ensure the medication is stored out of their reach.

What happens after treatment?

You will need to continue to complete a headache diary and supply this to your nurse each month for the first 3 months. After your 3rd injection, 2 to 3 months after the start of your treatment, the nurse will contact you to discuss how Fremanezumab is working for you and to review your diary together. If Fremanezumab has worked well, you will continue to receive the medication each month for a year. During this time, you must continue to complete the headache diary. At the 12 month stage your consultant will review the results to determine if treatment is to continue.

What if I miss an appointment?

If you miss your appointments regularly and do not comply with the service, we may need to put your treatment on hold. To avoid this please contact the clinic to re arrange your appointments if you cannot attend.

Contact details:

Should you require advice or information please contact:

Dystonia and Migraine team at Royal Preston Hospital:

Telephone: 01772 524274

Email: DystoniaNursesRPH@LTHTR.nhs.uk

Medical Secretaries:

Telephone: 01772 522556 / 01772 522548

Homecare Team:

Telephone: 01772 524003

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.nhs.uk/conditions/medicines-information NHS Choices Medicines Guide

www.medicines.org.uk/emc/browse-medicines

www.migrainetrust.org

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