

Quick reference guide

Cetuximab for the first-line treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer

Guidance

1 Cetuximab in combination with 5-fluorouracil (5-FU), folinic acid and oxaliplatin (FOLFOX), within its licensed indication, is recommended for the first-line treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer only when all of the following criteria are met:

- The primary colorectal tumour has been resected or is potentially operable.
- The metastatic disease is confined to the liver and is unresectable.
- The patient is fit enough to undergo surgery to resect the primary colorectal tumour and to undergo liver surgery if the metastases become resectable after treatment with cetuximab.
- The manufacturer rebates 16% of the amount of cetuximab used on a per patient basis.

2 Cetuximab in combination with 5-FU, folinic acid and irinotecan (FOLFIRI), within its licensed indication, is recommended for the first-line treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer only when all of the following criteria are met:

- The primary colorectal tumour has been resected or is potentially operable.
- The metastatic disease is confined to the liver and is unresectable.
- The patient is fit enough to undergo surgery to resect the primary colorectal tumour and to undergo liver surgery if the metastases become resectable after treatment with cetuximab.
- The patient is unable to tolerate or has contraindications to oxaliplatin.

3 Patients who meet the criteria in sections 1 and 2 should receive treatment with cetuximab for no more than 16 weeks. At 16 weeks, treatment with cetuximab should stop and the patient should be assessed for resection of liver metastases.

4 People with metastatic colorectal cancer with metastatic disease confined to the liver who receive cetuximab should have their treatment managed only by multidisciplinary teams that involve highly specialised liver surgical services.

Implementation tools

NICE has developed tools to help organisations put this guidance into practice (listed below). These are available on our website (www.nice.org.uk/TA176).

- Costing tools:
 - costing report to estimate the national savings and costs associated with implementation
 - costing template to estimate the local costs and savings involved.
- Audit support for monitoring local practice.

Further information

Ordering information

You can download the following documents from www.nice.org.uk/TA176

- A quick reference guide (this document) – the recommendations.
- 'Understanding NICE guidance' – a summary for patients and carers.
- The NICE guidance.
- Details of all the evidence that was looked at and other background information.

For printed copies of the quick reference guide or 'Understanding NICE guidance', phone NICE publications on 0845 003 7783 or email publications@nice.org.uk and quote:

- N1979 (quick reference guide)
- N1980 ('Understanding NICE guidance').

Related NICE guidance

For information about NICE guidance that has been issued or is in development, see www.nice.org.uk

Published

- Cetuximab for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer following failure of oxaliplatin-containing chemotherapy (terminated appraisal). NICE technology appraisal 150 (2008). Available from: www.nice.org.uk/TA150
- Bevacizumab and cetuximab for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer. NICE technology appraisal guidance 118 (2007). Available from: www.nice.org.uk/TA118
- Capecitabine and oxaliplatin in the adjuvant treatment of stage III (Dukes' C) colon cancer. NICE technology appraisal guidance 100 (2006). Available from: www.nice.org.uk/TA100
- Irinotecan, oxaliplatin and raltitrexed for the treatment of advanced colorectal cancer (review of technology appraisal 33). NICE technology appraisal guidance 93 (2005). Available from www.nice.org.uk/TA93
- Improving outcomes in colorectal cancers – manual update. NICE cancer service guidance (2004). Available from www.nice.org.uk/csgcc
- Guidance on the use of capecitabine and tegafur with uracil for metastatic colorectal cancer. NICE technology appraisal guidance 61 (2003). Available from www.nice.org.uk/TA61

Under development

- Bevacizumab in combination with oxaliplatin and either 5-FU or capecitabine for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer. NICE technology appraisal (publication date to be confirmed).
- Diagnosis and management of colorectal cancer. NICE clinical guideline (publication expected July 2011).

Updating the appraisal

This technology appraisal will be considered for review in May 2012. Information about the progress of a review will be available at www.nice.org.uk/TA176

This guidance represents the view of NICE, which was arrived at after careful consideration of the available evidence. Healthcare professionals are expected to take it fully into account when exercising their clinical judgement. However, the guidance does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Implementation of this guidance is the responsibility of local commissioners and/or providers. Commissioners and providers are reminded that it is their responsibility to implement the guidance, in their local context, in light of their duties to avoid unlawful discrimination and to have regard to promoting equality of opportunity. Nothing in this guidance should be interpreted in a way which would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

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