

Ipilimumab for previously untreated advanced melanoma

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Ipilimumab is recommended as a possible treatment for adults with advanced (unresectable or metastatic) melanoma that has not been treated before.

What does this mean for me?

If you have advanced (unresectable or metastatic) melanoma that has not been treated before, and your doctor thinks that ipilimumab is the right treatment, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS.

NICE has produced separate guidance on when ipilimumab can be offered to people with advanced melanoma that has been treated before.

Ipilimumab should be available on the NHS within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work in relation to how much they cost compared with other treatments available on the NHS.

NICE applies special considerations to treatments that can extend the lives of people who are nearing the end of their life. Ipilimumab was recommended because it works as well or better than

other treatments available on the NHS. Although it costs more than other treatments, this was justified by the benefits it provided when the special considerations were applied.

The condition and the treatment

Melanoma is a form of skin cancer. Advanced melanoma is when the cancer can't be completely removed by surgery (unresectable) or has spread to other parts of the body (metastatic).

Ipilimumab (also known as Yervoy) is a drug given by injection, which helps the body's immune system to recognise and destroy melanoma cells.

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more.

Sources of advice and support

- CancerHelp UK (the patient information website of Cancer Research UK), 0808 800 4040, www.cancerhelp.org.uk
- Macmillan Cancer Support, 0808 808 0000, www.macmillan.org.uk
- Melanoma UK, 0808 171 2455, www.melanomauk.org.uk
- Skcin - Karen Clifford Skin Cancer Charity, www.skcin.org

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Accreditation

