

Azacitidine for treating acute myeloid leukaemia with more than 30% bone marrow blasts

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Azacitidine (Vidaza) is not recommended for treating acute myeloid leukaemia with more than 30% bone marrow blasts in people of 65 years or older who can't have stem cell transplants.

What does this mean for me?

Azacitidine should not normally be prescribed on the NHS for the condition as described above. Your doctor should talk to you about other treatment options available to you.

If you are already taking azacitidine the condition as described above, you should be able to continue taking it until you and your doctor decide it is the right time to stop.

The condition and the treatments

Leukaemia is a type of cancer that affects white blood cells.

In people with acute myeloid leukaemia, stem cells inside the bone marrow (spongy material inside the bones) make too many white blood cells that aren't fully developed and don't work properly. These are called blast cells, or bone marrow blasts.

Too many blast cells can lead to symptoms such as tiredness, unusual bleeding and frequent infections, which get worse as more blast cells are made.

Treatments for acute myeloid leukaemia include different types of drugs and cell transplants.

Azacitidine is a type of drug called a hypomethylating agent, which can help to stop cancer cells from growing.

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more.

These organisations can give you advice and support:

- [Macmillan Cancer Support](#), 0808 808 0000
- [Bloodwise](#), 0207 504 2200
- [Leukaemia Care](#), 08088 010 444
- [Cancer Research UK Patient Information](#) (previously CancerHelp UK), 0808 800 4040

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Accreditation

