

Temozolomide

Information for patients

This leaflet is about Temozolomide treatment, which is a type of chemotherapy. It explains why you may need this drug, the benefits and risks of treatment, and what to expect on your visits to hospital. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to the doctors or nurses caring for you.

What is Temozolomide?

Temozolomide is a type of chemotherapy. It is also known as Temodal. You might have it as a treatment for a type of brain tumour called malignant (cancerous) glioma. Since 2006, it has also been used to treat pituitary tumours. It is used for the treatment of both aggressive pituitary adenomas and pituitary carcinomas to help with tumour growth control.

What are the benefits of Temozolomide?

Temozolomide works by stopping cancer cells from making DNA and will often shrink tumours. It has been shown to improve the survival rates in in pituitary tumour treatment. It has shown an improvement rate in the 5-year overall survival and 5-year progression-free survival in both aggressive pituitary adenomas and pituitary carcinomas.

What are the risks of taking Temozolomide?

Common side effect include:

- stomach discomfort
- nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting
- constipation
- diarrhoea
- headaches
- dizziness
- drowsiness

It may also decrease the platelet count, or cause abnormally low white blood cell count and haemoglobin levels.

Are there any alternatives?

There are no alternatives to this treatment.

What happens before my treatment?

Your clinical nurse specialist (CNS) or doctor will contact you about starting on this medication.

What happens during my treatment?

The CNS will take your weight, height, body surface area and routine observations. They will also do a blood test to check full blood count, renal and liver function tests.

How long does the treatment take?

The treatment is given monthly in a 28 day period, and most patients have 6 to 12 months of treatment. You will need to come in the hospital and see your CNS or doctor for a blood test and clinical review. This includes monitoring your platelets and white blood cells, your liver function after each treatment cycle and midway through 28 days treatment cycle.

How do I take Temozolomide?

Temozolomide is taken orally as a capsule, and usually patients are started on 300mg to 400mg daily dose (at dose 200mg/m²) for 1 to 5 days on a 28 days cycle. You may be given a prescription of an anti-sickness medication to prevent and control side effects of nausea and vomiting during treatment.

What happens after my treatment?

Your first imaging scan is normally within 3 months of treatment. After treatment, you will have regular imaging to monitor tumour growth and control, routine blood tests and a multidisciplinary team (MDT) discussion for your care management.

Contact details

If you have any clinical queries, please contact one of the Endocrine Nurse Specialists:

Leah Laniba or Nadia Gordon on 020 3299 4047 or 020 3299 2047.

Email: kch-tr.endonurses@nhs.net

Available Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Further information

The below websites give further information about Temozolomide:

Macmillan Cancer Support:

www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/treatments-and-drugs/temozolomide

The Pituitary Foundation:

bnf.nice.org.uk/drug/temozolomide.html

Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net

You can also contact us by using our online form at www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.