Satakunnan hyvinvointialue

Abatacept, ORENCIA ® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases

Indications

Abatacept is used for treatment of indications such as rheumatoid arthritis and juvenile arthritis when sufficient treatment response is not achieved with traditional antirheumatic drugs or they cannot be used.

Drug product and mode of action

Abatacept belongs to a group of drugs called biologic drugs. T-cells in the human immune system play a central role in the onset of inflammation and joint damage caused by rheumatoid arthritis. Abatacept binds to the surface of T-cells and reduces inflammation by blocking signalling between the cells.

Dosage and method of administration

Abatacept can be given as a subcutaneous injection (under the skin) or intravenous infusion (into a vein). Abatacept is usually given as a subcutaneous injection 125 mg once a week, using either a prefilled injector pen (ClickJet) or syringe. An intravenous infusion takes 30 minutes and the patient is monitored at the outpatient clinic for 60 minutes. Subsequent infusions are given 2 and 4 weeks after the first dose, and then once every 4 weeks.

Adverse effects

Injection site reactions or allergic reactions such as itching, rash or cough may occur in connection with administration of the drug. Infusion reactions are rare. Headaches, dizziness and blood pressure elevation are possible. In some cases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) may worsen. Abatacept may increase susceptibility to infections. A slight reduction of leucocytes (white blood cells) may occur, but severe leucocyte loss is rare. The use of the drug must be stopped for the duration of infections with fever or infections that require treatment with antibiotics.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

The use of abatacept is not recommended during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The use of the drug should be stopped three months before a planned pregnancy.

Treatment follow-up

Safety tests are taken a month after onset of treatment, and then once every 3–6 months at doctor’s discretion. The results are checked at the health centre. The safety tests include the following: Basic blood count, B-NEUT and ALT.
CREA, U-ChemScr, CRP and ESR are measured in connection with treatment assessment before doctor's appointment every 6–12 months.

Other considerations

Depending on mode of administration, abatacept is stopped for at least a week before and two weeks after surgery. The operation is timed so that it takes place when the next dose would be taken. In the case of individual patients, the duration of the drug pause also depends on the nature and urgency of the operation, patient's overall infection risk, and risk of recurrence of the underlying illness. The use of the drug may be restarted once the wound has healed properly. Vaccines that contain live attenuated organisms must not be given during treatment. Before the onset of treatment, any dental procedures required must be completed and vaccinations must be up to date.

Link Reumalääkkeiden ohjeet | Reumatalo.fi | Terveyskylä.fi (in Finnish)

Contact information

Satasairaala Wellbeing services county of Satakunta
For Satasairaala's website, go to www.satasairaala.fi