Satakunnan hyvinvointialue

Golimumab, SIMPONI ® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases

Indications

Golimumab is used for treatment of indications such as rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis (Bechterew´s disease), arthritic psoriasis and occasionally, juvenile arthritis, when sufficient treatment response is not achieved with traditional antirheumatic drugs or they cannot be used.

Drug product and mode of action

Golimumab belongs to a class of drugs called biologic drugs. Cytokines, which provide communication between cells, maintain the inflammatory reaction in rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory joint diseases. In terms of inflammation, one of the most important cytokines is TNF (Tumour Necrosis Factor). Golimumab is a TNF antibody that neutralises the biological activity of TNF. It soothes joint inflammation, prevents it from progressing, and prevents joint damage.

Dosage and method of administration

Golimumab is given as a subcutaneous injection (under the skin) 50 mg once a month using either a prefilled syringe or injector pen. In some cases, such as patients weighing more than 100 kg, the dose may be 100 mg once a month.

Adverse effects

The most common adverse effect is local skin irritation at the injection site, such as redness, pain or itching. Other adverse effects that may occur include respiratory infections, rash, itching, headache, worsening of heart failure and changes in blood count. Allergic reactions are relatively rare, however. Golimumab may increase susceptibility for infections. The use of the drug must be stopped for the duration of infections with fever or infections that require treatment with antibiotics. The risk of tuberculosis must be investigated before the onset of treatment.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

The use of golimumab is not recommended during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Treatment follow-up

Safety tests are taken **a month after onset of treatment, and then once every 3–6 months**. 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

Golimumab is stopped four weeks before and about 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)

Wellbeing services county of Satakunta