Satakunnan hyvinvointialue

Ustekinumab, STELARA ® – in the treatment of rheumatic diseases

Indications

Ustekinumab is used for treatment of active arthritic psoriasis when sufficient treatment response is not achieved with traditional antirheumatic drugs and other biologic antirheumatic drugs or they cannot be used.

Drug product and mode of action

Ustekinumab 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. Ustekinumab is an antibody that neutralises the biological activity of IL-12/IL-23 cytokines. It soothes joint inflammation, prevents it from progressing, and prevents joint damage.

Dosage and method of administration

Ustekinumab is given as a subcutaneous injection (under the skin), 45 mg, using a prefilled syringe. The second dose is given 4 weeks after the first one, followed by once every 12 weeks. In persons weighing more than 100 kg, using a 90 mg dose may be considered.

Adverse effects

Possible adverse effects include respiratory infections, dizziness, headache, itching, diarrhoea and mild injection site reactions. Ustekinumab may increase susceptibility to infections. Allergic reactions and severe infections are relatively rare, however. 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 ustekinumab is not recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding. It is recommended that the use of the drug is stopped 15 weeks before a planned pregnancy.

Treatment follow-up

Safety tests are taken **a month after** onset of treatment. 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

Ustekinumab is stopped at least four weeks before and two weeks after surgery. In the case of individual patients, the duration of the drug pause also depends on the type 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 should 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