



## References

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# Eylea (aflibercept) intravitreal injection

## Information for patients

Ophthalmology Departments  
Lincoln County Hospital  
Pilgrim Hospital  
[www.ulh.nhs.uk](http://www.ulh.nhs.uk)

## **Aim of the leaflet**

The aim of this leaflet is to provide information on Eylea (afibercept) intravitreal injections for the treatment of AMD.

## **Introduction**

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness in people over 50 years of age. There are two types of macular degeneration: dry and wet. In the 'wet' (or neovascular) form of AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow in the back of the eye. Sometimes these vessels leak blood or fluid that causes blurred or distorted vision. Without treatment, vision loss may be quick and severe.

## **How does Eylea work?**

Eylea works by inhibiting the growth of the abnormal blood vessels that cause AMD. It is also used to treat swelling of the macula due to AMD. The goal of treatment is to prevent further loss of vision.

## **What are the limitations of this treatment?**

Although some patients have regained vision, the medication may not restore vision that has already been lost and may not ultimately prevent further loss of vision caused by the disease.

## **Contact details**

If you have any queries or concerns about this treatment please speak to your eye doctor during your consultation.

If you have any questions about any of the information contained in this leaflet please contact:

Macular disease coordinator on 01522 573566 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

## **Other useful contact details**

### **Clinic 8, Lincoln County Hospital**

01522 512512 ext 2457

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

### **Royle Eye Department, Pilgrim Hospital**

01205 445626

Monday to Thursday 8am to 8pm, Friday 9am to 5pm

## **External sources of information**

The following websites have further information:

### **Macular Society**

Tel: 0845 241 2041

[www.maculardisease.org](http://www.maculardisease.org)

### **Royal National Institute of Blind People**

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Side effects may include:

- eye pain
- bloodshot eye (subconjunctival haemorrhage)
- irregularity or swelling of the cornea
- inflammation of the eye
- visual disturbances such as small specks in the vision

## **Patient responsibilities**

You should contact an eye doctor as instructed in the accompanying advice sheet if any of the following signs of infection or other complications develop:

- increasing pain
- increasing blurring vision or decreasing vision
- increasing painful redness of the eye (compared to immediately after the injection)
- increasing discharge from the eye

DO NOT rub your eyes or swim for three days after each injection. You should keep all post-injection appointments or scheduled telephone calls so that your eye doctor can check for complications.

## **How is this treatment carried out?**

After the pupil is dilated and the eye is numbed with local anaesthesia, the medication is injected into the vitreous, or jelly-like substance in the back chamber of the eye. Eylea is given by an injection into your eye as needed at regular intervals (about every four weeks); your eye doctor will tell you how often you will receive the injection and for how long.

## **Are there any alternatives to this treatment?**

You do not have to receive treatment for your condition, although without treatment, AMD can lead to further vision loss and blindness, sometimes very quickly. Other forms of treatment are available. At present, there are three other approved treatments for neovascular AMD:

- photodynamic therapy with a drug called Visudyne
- other drug injection into the eye: Lucentis or Macugen

Although both of these treatments have been proven to slow down the rate of visual loss, most people's vision will not improve.

In addition to the approved medications, some ophthalmologists use other medications that have not been specifically approved for use in the treatment of AMD, but which have shown some benefit. The two medications used this way are:

- Intravitreal Kenalog - a long-acting steroid drug
- Avastin - a similar drug to Eylea

## **What are the complications from the medication and injection?**

### **Complications of Eylea in other body parts**

A small number of patients (less than 2%) experienced blood clots (arterial thromboembolic events such as heart attack or stroke) after administration of Eylea. There is no evidence that Eylea caused these complications.

Whenever a medication is used in a large number of patients, a small number of coincidental life-threatening problems may occur that have no relationship to the treatment. For example, patients with diabetes are already at increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. If one of these patients being treated with Eylea suffers a heart attack or stroke, it may be caused by the diabetes and not Eylea treatment.

## **Known risks of intravitreal eye injections**

Your condition may not get better or may become worse. Any or all of the following complications may cause decreased vision and/or have a possibility of causing blindness. Additional procedures may be needed to treat these complications. During the follow up visits or phone calls, you will be checked for possible side effects and the results will be discussed with you.

Possible complications of the procedure and administration of Eylea include but are not limited to:

- retinal detachment
- cataract formation (clouding of the lens of the eye)
- increased pressure in the eye (glaucoma)
- reduced pressure in the eye (hypotony)
- damage to the retina or cornea (structures of the eye)
- bleeding

There is also the possibility of an eye infection (endophthalmitis). You may receive eye drops with instructions on when to use them to reduce the possibility of this occurring. Any of these rare complications may lead to severe, permanent loss of vision.