



University Hospitals Bristol
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information service
Bristol Haematology & Oncology Centre
Molecular radiotherapy unit

Lutathera treatment



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Lutathera (lutetium-177 therapy)

You have been referred for a type of therapy known as targeted radionuclide therapy also known as peptide receptor radionuclide therapy (PRRT). You may be offered this to relieve symptoms of carcinoid syndrome and to control the growth of neuro endocrine tumours (NETs).

What is lutathera?

This treatment uses a radioactive substance (radionuclide) called lutathera. It is injected into the bloodstream. Cancer cells absorb the radionuclide more than normal cells. This means they receive a higher dose of radioactivity. We aim to give four treatments, usually as an outpatient, approximately eight weeks apart.

Lutathera consists of:

- a peptide molecule that targets the cancer cells
- lutetium 177- a radionuclide that emits radiation to destroy the cancer cells

Pre-treatment information

Before each treatment, you will be asked to provide blood samples and see the doctor to ensure your suitability for treatment. We need to know about any medicines you are taking, even if it is a medicine you have bought yourself. If you are also being treated with octreotide (Sandostatin LAR) or lanreotide (Somatuline Autogel), we need to know the date of your last injection. This is because we need to plan each cycle of lutathera therapy to be given in the days just before or just after your next injection is due.

If you take oral medication instead of these injections, radiographers will discuss this with you.

Radiographers from molecular radiotherapy (MRT) will contact you before you come for your treatment, to give you radiation protection advice to follow after treatment, and to answer any questions you may have.

As you will be radioactive following treatment, you will be asked to restrict contact with friends, family and the general public following treatment, and will need to sleep apart from your partner for up to 14 nights post treatment. You will also need to limit contact with pregnant women and children. Written advice will be provided.

After treatment, you will also be given a small orange card to carry for the duration of all your treatments outlining this advice. The radiographers will check that there is no possibility of pregnancy. Men and women will be advised not to cause a pregnancy or conceive during the treatment and for at least six months afterwards.

How is treatment given?

Treatment is given as an outpatient on ward D603, level 6 in the Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre. The whole procedure will take most of the day.

On arrival you will be shown to your room. You will then be seen by a doctor and radiographers. We ask that you do not bring any family members or friends under 16 years, or anyone who could be pregnant. Relatives will be asked to leave just before the procedure starts, usually around 8.30am. You will be in isolation for most of the day.

Please bring things to keep you entertained, such as mobile phone, tablet or books. You may also bring in drinks or snacks and store them in the fridge.

You will be given some anti-sickness medication to stop you feeling sick. A cannula (small plastic tube) will then be placed into a vein in each arm, and an infusion of amino acids will be started and this will run for hours. It helps to protect your kidneys from the radioactivity. After the amino acids have been running for 30 minutes, the lutathera will be given in the other arm which takes around 30 minutes to complete, after which the amino acids continue to run for a further three hours. The cannulas will be removed before you go home.

After treatment, you will need to stay for several hours, drinking plenty of fluids and emptying your bladder frequently. A radiographer or physicist will monitor the levels of radiation in your body before you are discharged.

Side effects

Side effects differ from patient to patient, and may include:

- increased levels of fatigue
- nausea, you will be given medication to take home
- mild hair loss, but your hair will regrow following treatment
- temporary increase in your current symptoms, flushing, palpitations, wheezing, diarrhoea. This usually only lasts for approximately 24 hours after treatment
- temporary drop in some of your blood cell levels. This may make you more prone to picking up infections, and you may

bleed or bruise more easily. You will be asked to have regular blood tests after treatment which will be closely monitored.

If you have an increase in pain, or experience new pain, which is not helped by your usual medication, please contact one of the phone numbers on the orange card you will be given.

After each treatment

Radiographers will have discussed radiation protection precautions that you need to follow after each treatment cycle. This information will be given to you at each treatment visit, along with an orange card containing important numbers (that we will ask you to keep on you for a period of time following each treatment).

Radiographers will ring you a few days after each treatment, and you will have an appointment to see your consultant oncologist prior to the next treatment cycle.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact us:

**Molecular Radiotherapy Unit
Bristol Cancer Institute
Bristol Haematology & Oncology Centre
Horfield Road
Bristol
BS2 8ED**

Email: Ubh-tr.bhocmolecularrt@nhs.net

Tel: **0117 3422 694**

Notes

Please note that if for any reason you would value a second opinion concerning your diagnosis or treatment, you are entirely within your rights to request this.

The first step would usually be to discuss this with the doctor or other lead clinician who is responsible for your care.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **NHS Smokefree** on **0300 123 1044**

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:
www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/

Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000

Minicom: 0117 934 9869

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.

For this leaflet in large print or PDF format, please email patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk.