

**Treatment with
Lucentis®
Information for patients**

Lucentis® is used to treat a neovascular (wet) age-related macular disease (AMD). •

What is wet AMD?

- Wet AMD affects the macula which is the part of the retina which allows you to see details in the centre of your vision. •
- In wet AMD, new, weak blood vessels grow at the macula. These can leak and eventually cause scarring. Wet AMD can progress quickly and can affect your ability to do everyday things such as reading, shopping and driving.
- Lucentis® prevents the new, weak blood vessels from growing and leaking and may even repair some of the damage that has been done. •

What will treatment with Lucentis® be like?

- Lucentis® is given as an injection into your eye.
- At your appointment, a nurse will get you ready for the injection.
- Your eye and the skin around your eye will be cleaned with an iodine solution to avoid infection.
- Your face and the area around the eye will be covered loosely with a special drape.
- The doctor will use a device to hold your eye open
- Your eye will be numbed with an anaesthetic eye drop so that there will be no pain.
- The doctor will then give the injection into the white part of your eye.
- Some patients say they feel a little pressure on the eye when the injection is being given.

What will happen after my Lucentis® injection?

- The doctor will perform some routine eye tests to make sure the treatment went well.
- The doctor will ask you to use eye drops for a few days to prevent any infections.
- The white of your eye is likely to be red:
 - This redness is normal and should go away in a few days
 - If it doesn't go away or gets worse, contact the hospital
- You may see a few 'floaters' or 'spots' in your vision.
 - These spots are normal and should go away in a few days
 - If they don't go away, or get worse, contact the hospital

Occasionally, injections in the eye can cause infection, so watch for changes in the condition of your eye in the week following your injection.

- If you have increasing pain or discomfort, swelling, increasing redness, blurred or decreased vision, increasing sensitivity to light, drying of the surface of your eye or any other concern, contact the hospital as soon as possible.

How well does Lucentis® work?

- Over the course of treatment, most patients find that their vision stays the same, and for some, it gets better
- Around one third of patients will have noticeably better vision
- It is important to talk to the doctor at your appointment about how the treatment is working for you

How long will I need to continue with Lucentis® treatment?

- Firstly, it is important to go to your appointments regularly and tell the doctor how you feel about your treatment experience and the results.
- Most people will start with a course of three injections each one a month apart.
- You will then need regular tests, usually monthly, which will help the doctor decide whether further treatment is necessary.
- Most people need 9 or more injections over a period of 2 years.
- Not every person will have noticeably better vision with Lucentis®, but without treatment, your eyesight could get worse quickly.
- Even if your vision does not get better immediately, don't stop going to your appointments.

How safe is the treatment?

- In recent trials, serious complications affecting the eye itself were rare and occurred in fewer than 2 patients out of every hundred.
- Possible complications include retinal detachment, bleeding, cataract (clouding of the lens of the eye), glaucoma (increased pressure in the eye), damage to the retina and cornea. Although rare, infection in the eye can be very serious and it is very important to pick it up early.
- Tiny amounts of the drug can get into the blood supply and because of the way the drug works, it has been suggested that there might be a slight increase in risk of strokes and heart attacks. In studies so far, the rate has been low at 3 out of every hundred patients which is similar to the rate

expected in this age group. It is possible that the rate might be higher for people who are already at higher risk.

Are there any other treatments?

- Photodynamic therapy (PDT) can prevent or delay loss of vision in some patients with a particular form of wet AMD. In studies, fewer people lost vision and more people gained vision with Lucentis® than with PDT
- Avastin is similar to Lucentis® and some doctors believe it works as well. It has not been tested in the same way as Lucentis® and does not have official approval. It is much cheaper than Lucentis® and this has been a consideration for people who have had to fund their own treatment.
- At the moment, the only funding for Lucentis® is for patients who have wet AMD proven by fluorescein angiography (which we do at the Eye and Ear Hospital)

What will the appointment involve?

- Your appointment may involve quite a bit of waiting as you will be seen by an orthoptist and a doctor. You may need to have a scan of your eyes called Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) and if treatment is needed, we try to arrange it for the same day if at all possible. You may wish to bring a snack and a drink with you or be prepared to go the cafeteria for refreshments.
- Please bring your current spectacles with you and a list of any tablets or medicines that you are taking.

Eye drops are used to enlarge your pupils which cause temporary blurring of the vision. You may experience glare from bright lights or sunshine so you may wish to bring a pair of sunglasses with you.

What will happen if I don't have treatment?

In most people with wet AMD, central vision gets worse quite quickly and causes difficulty with reading and other tasks requiring detailed vision. If both eyes are affected, most people have to stop driving. Fortunately, it is extremely rare for the side vision to be affected and many people go on to lead restricted but fulfilling lives.

Help is available for people with poor central vision. Low vision clinics loan magnifiers and give advice on the best ways of making use of the remaining vision. Social services can help in a number of ways including advising on your home environment and giving confidence in getting around.