Medicine: dupilumab (brand name: Dupixent®)

Sanofi

The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has assessed dupilumab for the treatment of adults and adolescents 12 years and older who have severe asthma with type 2 inflammation. It is used as an add-on maintenance treatment in patients whose asthma is not well enough controlled by high dose inhaled corticosteroids and another medicine used for maintenance treatment. This document summarises the SMC decision and what it means for patients.

What has SMC said?

After careful consideration, SMC has accepted dupilumab for the treatment of severe asthma as described above in certain patients (restricted use). The restriction means that dupilumab may be used in patients who:

- have eosinophils in their blood (explained below) at or above a certain level (150 or more cells per microlitre);
- have a fraction of nitric oxide (NO) in their exhaled breath (explained below) at or above 25 parts per billion (measured with a FeNO test);
- have had at least four asthma attacks in the previous year; and
- previously received a similar treatment (a biologic treatment) called an anti-lgE or anti-IL-5 treatment.

This SMC advice takes into account a confidential discount offered by the pharmaceutical company that improves the cost-effectiveness of dupilumab.

What does SMC's decision mean for patients?

If your healthcare professional thinks that dupilumab for use as described above is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland.

What is dupilumab used for?

Dupilumab is used to treat severe asthma. Asthma is a long-term condition in which the airways become inflamed and symptoms include breathlessness, coughing and wheezing. In severe asthma, the symptoms are not resolved with the usual treatments. Dupilumab is used in addition to these treatments in patients aged 12 years and older who have severe asthma with type 2 inflammation. In this type of severe asthma there are specific signs of the inflammation that can be measured in the blood (a type of white blood cell called eosinophils) and in the air that the person breathes out (a gas produced by inflammatory cells called NO).

How does dupilumab work?

Dupilumab is a type of medicine called a monoclonal antibody (also known as a biologic treatment). It blocks the actions of interleukin 4 and interleukin 13 (IL-4 and IL-13), which are messengers in the immune system that are produced at high levels in patients with this type of asthma. By blocking IL-4 and IL-13, dupilumab helps to decrease the symptoms of asthma. It would provide another biologic treatment option for patients.

How does SMC make its decision?

SMC carefully considers every new medicine to make sure it benefits patients and is considered to be an acceptable use of the limited resources in NHSScotland.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Evidence from the company about how well the medicine works compared with current treatments available in Scotland, in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer.
- Information from patient groups about the potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.
- Advice from healthcare professionals about any benefits of the new medicine compared to current treatment, along with how the new medicine is likely to be used.

When SMC assesses a medicine it takes account of the needs of all patients in NHSScotland, not just those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

You can find more detailed information about the SMC assessment of dupilumab by looking at the SMC Detailed Advice Document (SMC2317).

More information

The organisation below can provide more information and support for people with asthma and their families. SMC is not responsible for the content of any information provided by external organisations.

Asthma UK and British Lung Foundation Partnership

http://www.auk-blf.org.uk

Asthma UK Helpline: 0300 222 5800

British Lung Foundation Helpline: 0300 0030 555

You can find out more about dupilumab (Dupixent®) in the European public assessment report (EPAR) summary for the public by searching for the medicine name on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) website.

http://www.ema.europa.eu