

Patient information

Sarilumab for Treatment of Severe COVID-19 in Critical Care

Critical Care Department

Patient Name:

Date Sarilumab administered:

What is Sarilumab and what is the reason for using it COVID-19?

Sarilumab is a biological agent that is licensed to reduce inflammation in a rheumatoid arthritis. The licensed route for sarilumab is subcutaneous injection.

In severe COVID 19 infection it is believed that an increase in the number of interleukin-6 (IL-6) proteins in your body cause inflammation which affects your lungs and makes you very unwell. Sarilumab blocks these IL-6 proteins and helps to reduce the inflammation.

Using sarilumab in COVID-19 is outside of the normal product license for this drug, however NHS England has approved the use of this treatment under strict criteria based on the recent results of a large clinical trial.

Results from the REMAP-CAP trial has shown that by giving IL-6 inhibitors within the first 24 hours of ICU/HDU admission we can:

- Reduce the risk of death by 24% compared to those that didn't get treatment.
- Save one life for every twelve patients given an IL-6 inhibitor.
- Reduce stay on a Critical Care ward by seven to ten days.

As this is a new treatment, our understanding or use of it may change as more research comes out.

How is the drug given?

It will be given by intravenous infusion into a vein in your arm over 60 minutes. This is an unlicensed route for this medication.

What are the potential side effects?

All medications, including sarilumab, carry the risk of severe allergic reaction.

- Sarilumab can alter blood results, including liver enzyme increase, lipid levels (such as cholesterol) increase and platelet count decrease.

- Sarilumab can increase your susceptibility to infection.
- If you have been exposed to Tuberculosis or hepatitis in the past, there is a theoretical risk that this medication may reactivate these infections.

Who can I tell about my side effects?

Please report any side effects to the MHRA via the Yellow Card Scheme. Reports are confidential and help to improve the safety of medicines.

Report side effects on the website (visit <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/> or search for Yellow Card Scheme and on the Yellow Card App on the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

Coronavirus specific Yellow Card reporting is available via the website (<https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>).

Contraception

Women of child-bearing potential **must** use effective contraception for **three months** after receiving a dose of sarilumab.

There is currently no data on safety of sarilumab in pregnant women.

Reasons why you would not be suitable to receive sarilumab

- Known allergy to sarilumab
- Another active, severe infection which is not considered to be under control by current antibiotics.
- 24 hours since COVID-19 related ICU admission or starting advanced respiratory support.
- Strong suspicion of latent TB infection.
- Signs of severe liver impairment.
- A low platelet count before starting treatment.
- If you are pregnant.
- A condition or treatment resulting in on-going significant suppression of the immune system, including: a low white blood cell count, recent chemotherapy, the use of biological immunosuppressants or high-dose steroids for another long-term condition.

Once you're at home:

Immunosuppression and risk of infection

Sarilumab will suppress your immune system and so there is an increased risk of infection for **at least one month** after you have your dose. Avoid coming into contact with anyone known to have chickenpox or shingles during this timeframe.

It will be very important that you seek medical advice should you become unwell or if you show any signs of infection (e.g. high temperature).

Live vaccines

Certain (live) vaccines should be avoided for **12 months** after you have received sarilumab unless advised by your doctor.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Disclaimer

This leaflet does not replace the patient information leaflet issued with your medicines, but you should read it in conjunction with them.

Further information

Pharmacy Departments

Royal Liverpool Hospital

Tel: 0151 706 2092

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2092

Aintree Hospital

Tel: 0151 525 5980

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Broadgreen Hospital

Tel: 0151 282 6056

Text phone Number

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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