

Treatment with ²²³Radium Dichloride (Xofigo®) for Bone Metastases from Castration-Resistant Prostate Cancer

Medical Physics & Clinical Engineering Department

Who is this information for?

Your doctor will have suggested treatment with ²²³Radium-Dichloride to you. This is a treatment using radioactivity (alpha radiation) to treat patients with advanced castration-resistant prostate cancer. This is a cancer of the prostate (a gland of the male reproductive system) that does not respond to treatment that reduces male hormones. This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about ²²³Radium treatment for bone metastases (secondary cancer spread into the bones). It contains information about the treatment and what to expect.

Please read this leaflet carefully before you proceed with this therapy because it contains important information for you.

What is ²²³Radium (²²³Ra) and what is used for?

²²³Radium is a radioactive material. On average, patients who receive this treatment live longer than those who don't. This treatment may also help to reduce bone pain, due to metastases. ²²³Radium is given as an injection. ²²³Radium targets cancer in the bones and we aim to slow the cancer growth, as illustrated in Figure 1. This treatment is only used when the disease has spread to the bone but is not known to have spread to other internal organs.

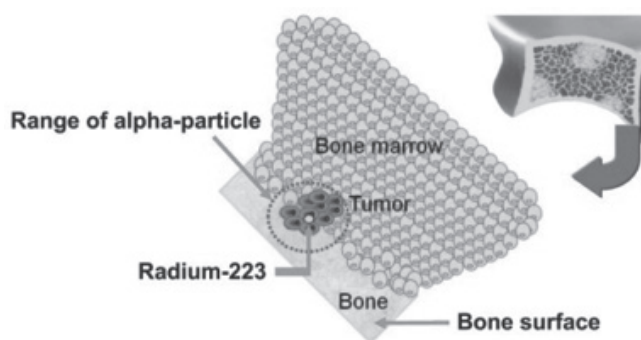


Figure 1 – The radioactive substance ²²³Ra mimics the calcium found in the bones. When injected into the patient, it reaches the bone where the cancer has spread and emits short-range radiation (alpha) which kills the surrounding tumour cells.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

What do you need to know before having ²²³Radium Treatment?

This treatment may decrease blood cell production in the bone marrow, which can make you vulnerable to anaemia, neutropenia or infections. Before starting the treatment and before each injection your doctor will perform a blood test to ensure you are medically fit for your treatment.

Talk to your consultant if:

- You have taken and / or are taking bisphosphonates
- You are having chemotherapy
- You are taking calcium, phosphate and / or Vitamin D (medicines to help your bones).

Your consultant will carefully consider if you can be treated with ²²³Radium and you may be asked to stop taking certain medication.

Contraception

If you are engaged in sexual activity with a woman who could become pregnant you are advised to use effective birth control measures up to and including 6 months after treatment with ²²³Radium.

There is a potential risk that the radioactivity from ²²³Radium could affect your fertility.

Driving and using machines

²²³Radium treatment will not affect your ability to drive or use machines.

Contraindications

- Uncontrollable incontinence
- Significant transfusion dependence.

What can I expect before this treatment starts?

You will need to complete a consent form before you have this treatment. This will be done during an appointment with your consultant.

Treatments will be planned at intervals of between 4-6 weeks. Prior to each treatment you will have to attend New Cross Hospital for a blood test 2 days prior to your review appointment with your consultant. The review appointment with your consultant will assess how the treatment is working and assess your fitness prior to your next treatment.

This treatment will be administered to you by staff who are trained and qualified to safely use ²²³Radium.

How is this treatment given?

This treatment will be administered to you via a cannula or butterfly into one of your veins. Please ensure you are well hydrated before your treatment. Drink at least two cups of water before you attend.

What happens before administration?

A cannula (a thin short tube) or a Butterfly (a short needle that has plastic tabs on either side) is placed into a vein in your arm and stabilised. A flush is given with some saline to ensure it is situated correctly. The injection is then given through this venous access slowly and is followed by some saline before the device is removed.

What happens after administration?

The health professional will give you a sheet with all the precautions you need to follow for the next seven days.

What are the benefits of having the treatment?

This treatment may reduce the pain you are feeling in your bones and may increase life expectancy.

Are there any risks in having this treatment?

An overdose is very unlikely. However, in the case of an accidental overdose, your doctor will start appropriate supportive treatment and may check you for changes in your blood status more frequently.

Are there any alternatives to this treatment?

There are a few alternatives to this treatment. They are listed below:

- Painkillers
- Steroids
- External beam radiotherapy (where possible)
- Hormone therapies.

Usually you would have already had treatment with the above alternatives, however if you have any queries or concerns please let your consultant know during your review appointments.

As this treatment involves radiation any associated risk is small and is outweighed by the benefit of treatment.

Are there any side effects in having this treatment?

Side effects from this treatment are rare and do not affect most people. The most common are fatigue and diarrhoea.

The most serious side effects are:

- Decrease in the number of red blood cells and platelets
- Decrease in the number of neutrophils, a type of white blood cells.

Your consultant will review your blood cell status before each treatment. Your treatment may be delayed or interrupted if your blood cell count decreases significantly.

You should contact your consultant or health professional if you experience any of the following side effects:

- Diarrhoea or constipation
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Some swelling of the lower legs and hands
- Fever
- More bleeding after injury than usual.

Some rare side effects are dehydration and injection site reactions (redness or pain).

Please note that most of the side effects are uncommon and your team of health professionals will be monitoring for the duration of the treatment.

If you have concerns or questions before starting your treatment please contact your consultant for advice.

What happens after ²²³Radium Treatment?

After the treatment there will be radiation precautions to be followed for one week after treatment. These will be given to you on a sheet on the day of the treatment. These precautions mainly involve good hygiene such as:

- Wash your hands thoroughly after going to the toilet
- Sit down, if possible, when using the toilet
- Ensure toilet is double-flushed after use for a week after each treatment
- Wash any linen or clothes that become stained with urine, blood, vomit or stools separately.

Although this treatment involves radiation, very little radiation is emitted from your body and does not pose a risk to the people around you.

There are no restrictions regarding social contact with adults after receiving this treatment. Prolonged contact with children under 5 years of age and pregnant ladies should be avoided for one week after treatment. These precautions will be discussed at the appointment for your treatment.

What should I do if I develop any side effects?

Get advice either from your GP, Consultant or you can contact Medical Physics on 01902 695526 (only available Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm).

Where can I get more information?

You will be able to get any further advice from your consultant at the review clinics. The staff in the Medical Physics are happy to answer any questions you may have before attending for your appointment. If you need a translator please contact us. Our telephone number is 01902 694172. Please call between 9:00am – 5:00pm. If no one is available please leave a brief message and someone will call you back.

There is also information available on the Cancer Research UK website:

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org>

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。