

Xofigo[®] Therapy



Nuclear Medicine

Introduction

Xofigo® (zo-FEEG-oh) is a treatment for patients with prostate cancer that has spread to the bones. It is used when other treatment options for this condition become limited. It can help to relieve bone pain, slow progressive disease and reduce complications such as bone fractures. This leaflet explains what is involved in Xofigo® therapy and the benefits and side effects of the treatment.

What is Xofigo®?

Xofigo® is a radioactive liquid given as an injection into a vein in your arm. Xofigo® contains Radium-223, a radioactive element chemically similar to calcium, which is absorbed into sites of bone cancer. The Radium-223 emits very short-range alpha particles, delivering a dose of radiation to cancer cells in the bone without affecting normal bone cells.

What is involved?

A course of Xofigo® therapy usually consists of six injections given at 4-week intervals. The Nuclear Medicine Department will arrange your injections and inform you of the dates you will need to attend. You will also see your Oncology Consultant regularly over the course of therapy to confirm that you are well enough to receive the treatment.

Therapy pre-assessment

Approximately one week before your first treatment, you will need to attend the Nuclear Medicine Department for the following:

- consultation with the Nuclear Medicine Physician,
- discussion about radiation risks and precautions with a Medical Physicist,
- a blood test,
- a bone scan, if the Nuclear Medicine Physician thinks it necessary.

The Nuclear Medicine Department will arrange these appointments. You can expect to be in the Department for approximately 1 hour for your pre-assessment. If a bone scan is required, you should allow a total of 4-5 hours for your appointment. Your appointment letter will state how long you are likely to be with us.

Xofigo® therapy procedure

It is important that you receive all six treatments. We tailor each treatment specifically for your requirements, and we order the Xofigo® especially for you. The Xofigo® cannot be used for another patient and if you do not receive it promptly, it will be wasted. It is therefore important that you inform us if there are likely to be any problems with your appointment dates.

About one week before each treatment, you will need to have a further blood test. This is because Xofigo® can affect the cells in your blood. The bloods will usually be taken during your appointment with your Oncologist. If your blood count does look abnormal, we may need to delay your treatment. It may be possible to take steps to improve your blood count, allowing you to continue Xofigo® therapy. This will be discussed with your Oncology Consultant as necessary.

Please allow approximately one hour for each treatment appointment. The injection of Xofigo® is very quick; however, the preparation takes time to ensure that the correct amount of radiation is given.

When you attend the Nuclear Medicine department for the treatment, we will initially check your height and weight. You will be taken into one of our clinical rooms, and a small needle will be inserted into a vein in your arm. The positioning of the needle will be checked using a saline drip. Once we are satisfied with this, the Xofigo® is administered slowly through the needle. To make sure that all of the Xofigo® is given, this is followed by a saline flush. You should not experience any pain during this process.

When this is finished, the needle will be removed from your arm. You will be given a “yellow card” which explains the radiation protection precautions you will need to follow, and how long for. After this, you may go home. There are no restrictions on travelling by public transport, and you will be able to drive yourself home.

What are the benefits of Xofigo® therapy?

Xofigo® has proven potential to extend life expectancy in this type of cancer. Xofigo® can relieve bone pain and reduce the risk of bone fractures.

What are possible side effects from Xofigo® therapy?

As with many types of cancer treatment, there are some possible side effects with Xofigo® therapy. The most common of these are nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting and swollen arms and legs. These occur in about 1 in 10 patients. Xofigo® can also cause low blood cell counts, which is why you will have a blood test before each injection. You may also experience a temporary increase in bone pain in the few days after each injection.

Are there any risks from the radiation?

After each injection, you will be asked to follow some simple safety precautions. This is because your body fluids will be slightly radioactive after the injection. These precautions will last for 4 weeks and will include observing good hygiene after using the toilet and washing any clothes contaminated with urine separately. If you are sexually active, you will also be asked to use condoms for six months after the end of your course of therapy.

Your “yellow card” will contain information to remind you of these precautions as well as our contact details so that if you have any concerns, you will be able to speak directly to one of the Medical Physics team.

Are there any alternatives to Xofigo® therapy?

Your Oncologist has referred you for Xofigo® therapy because they think it is the best option for you. However, there are alternatives available, called Strontium or Samarium therapies. These are Nuclear Medicine therapies similar to Xofigo® therapy. For these therapies a single radioactive injection is given, instead of six injections one month apart.

These therapies have also been shown to reduce bone pain, but have not been shown to improve life expectancy.

If you would like to know more about these therapies, you should discuss them with your Oncologist.

Where is the Nuclear Medicine department located?

Nuclear Medicine is in St Luke's Wing, on Level A. Nuclear Medicine can be accessed in the following ways:

- From the St Luke's Wing front entrance (off Gill Avenue): Turn right and go down the stairs or lift to Level A. Follow the signs directing you to Nuclear Medicine.
- From the St Luke's Wing back entrance (off Egerton Rd): Go straight ahead through the St Luke's Cancer Centre Reception area. At the end of the corridor, turn left and follow the signs to Nuclear Medicine.
- From the main hospital entrance (off Gill Avenue): Go straight ahead through the main entrance hall, turn left and follow the signs to St Luke's Wing. Go past Pharmacy (on the right). Carry on until you reach a junction. Turn right here and walk along the corridor until you come to a turning on the left (almost opposite the stairs and lift on the right). Follow this corridor until you come to a set of stairs and lift (on the left). Take either the stairs or lift to Level A. Follow the signs from here to Nuclear Medicine.

Travelling to the Hospital

By Road: The hospital is easily accessible by road using the A3 London to Portsmouth road. The exit for the hospital/cathedral is clearly marked in both directions. The hospital is on Egerton Road; for satellite navigation users, the postcode is GU2 7XX.

By Train: Guildford train station is on the main line between London Waterloo and Portsmouth and has a fast and frequent service. There are also connecting services to Basingstoke and direct lines to Reading, Dorking, Reigate, Redhill and Frimley. For further information please contact the passenger information line on 08457 48 49 50 or visit www.nationalrail.co.uk. From the railway station, it is possible to travel on the hospital by either bus or taxi.

By Bus: There is a regular bus service to the hospital directly from the Guildford Friary bus station and from the rear entrance of Guildford railway station along Guildford Park Road:

- Arriva No.4/5 (via Park Barn)
- Arriva No.16/26 (via Fairlands/Woodstreet Circular)
- Arriva No. 17/27 (via Rydes Hill/Grange Park)
- Arriva No.36/37 (Morrow - Bushy Hill via Guildford)

There is also a park and ride service available from larger car parks on the outskirts of Guildford. For further information on bus timings, please contact 03456 009009 or download the park and ride bus information from www.surreycc.gov.uk/buses. Buses stop directly outside the hospital main entrance.

Taxi: There are taxi ranks at Guildford railway station, next to the Friary shopping centre and at the top of the High Street. Alternatively, you may wish to contact local firms to book in advance. There is a freephone link from the hospital to City Cabs (Tel 01483 888666). The telephones for this service are situated next to the main entrance reception desk, in A&E reception and in the Radiotherapy reception of St Luke's Wing.

Car Parking: Parking spaces can be found opposite the back entrance to St Luke's Cancer Centre. Additional spaces for oncology patients are clearly marked by the "O" symbol. Please be aware that parking is limited at peak times. There are some parking bays for disabled badge holders near all hospital entrances. Patients attending St. Luke's Cancer Centre for outpatient appointments are able to park at a reduced rate of £1.50 per 24hr period. In order to benefit from this concession, patients will need to follow the guide below:

- A parking permit will be issued with your first outpatient appointment letter and is valid for 3 months.
- The date of your first appointment will already be entered on the permit.
- Please enter your car registration details in the space provided on the permit.

- When you attend for your appointment, you must purchase a discounted ticket and display in your vehicle along with the permit.
- Any vehicles parked in the Level A car park without a valid permit and ticket will be issued a fixed penalty notice or clamped.
- Parking enquiries should be addressed to CP-Plus (01483 571122 ext. 6962) and not the staff at St. Luke's Cancer Centre.

Alternative parking can be found in the main hospital, which is also pay-and-display. Please refer to the signs for up-to-date instructions and charges. Weekly parking tickets are also available. If you have problems parking, please direct your enquiries to the CP-Plus Car Park management office in the front entrance of the main hospital. We encourage you to use alternative means of travel where possible.

Key reference source

Further information on the drug (please note this is an American website):

- <http://www.xofigo-us.com/patient>

Contact details

For further information and advice

We want to make your visit to us as worry-free as possible. If you require any further advice, or if you have more questions, please contact us on **01483 406701** (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm). Alternatively, you can leave a message on our answer phone and we will respond as soon as possible.

Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) *Being Open* best practice framework, November 2010.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located in far left corner as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

Review date: January 2018
Author: Felicity Horton & James Scuffham
PIN150113–141b

