

Patient information

Intravesical Mitomycin C

Urology Department

Your consultant has advised you to have Intravesical Mitomycin C treatment. This leaflet explains what to expect when you have this treatment.

What is Mitomycin C?

It is a chemotherapy drug which can be given directly into the bladder (known as 'intravesical' therapy) to treat non-invasive bladder cancer.

Non-invasive bladder cancer normally affects a few layers of cells on the inner surface of the bladder but it can progress to more aggressive disease if not treated promptly and effectively. If suspected, patients undergo a trans-urethral resection of a bladder tumour (TURBT) procedure to diagnose or treat it. [For more information, please ask for a copy of the patient information leaflet PIF 1229 'Trans-urethral resection of a bladder tumour'].

The TURBT procedure will remove the visible tumour but it is important to make sure that no cancer cells have been left behind. If these are left untreated they have the potential to regrow and form another tumour.

What is the aim of this treatment?

Mitomycin C aims to destroy any remaining tumour cells that may be left behind after the TURBT procedure.

What are the risks involved?

Common

- Some bladder discomfort after treatment.
- Flu-like symptoms which can persist for two to three days.
- Discoloured urine.
- Small debris in your urine.
- Blood in your urine.

Occasional

- Skin rash (this can be treated by antihistamines - see your community pharmacist if needed).
- Failure to complete the course of treatment due to bladder discomfort.

- Urinary tract infection.
- Narrowing of the urethra following repeated use of a urinary catheter.

Rare

- Severe pain after receiving Mitomycin C, persisting afterwards.
- Allergic reaction to the instilled chemicals, requiring discontinuation of the treatment.

What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?

You may be at increased risk of a tumour re-growing and reforming.

How often will I have this treatment?

It is usually given as a one off dose ideally within 24 hours of the TURBT procedure either in theatre or on the ward. Depending on the stage and grade of the tumour, your doctor may decide that you need to have additional doses given over a number of weeks or months. These may be given as once-weekly instillations over several weeks or once-monthly over several months and may be done in clinic as an outpatient.

Before the procedure

You may be asked to limit the amount of fluids you drink before having Mitomycin C treatment. Drinking too much can make your bladder feel uncomfortably full, and drinking less helps to increase the concentration of the chemotherapy drug in your bladder. If you take water tablets (diuretics), these should be taken later in the day, after the treatment.

You may be asked about any previous illnesses, operations, drug allergies or medications you are taking so it is important you have all of this information available and bring in your current medications. You will then need to sign a consent form for the treatment. You will be asked to empty your bladder before treatment.

What happens during the procedure?

You do not require sedation for this procedure but you may be asleep if you have this in theatre after a TURBT procedure. You will have some anaesthetic gel or lubricating jelly applied to your urethra by the nursing staff to reduce any discomfort you may feel on insertion of the catheter.

You will have a fine plastic tube (catheter) passed into the bladder and the Mitomycin C (approximately half a cup of fluid) will be slowly given through it. This is not painful but can be a little uncomfortable. The catheter may then be removed (in a clinic setting) or left in if you are on the ward or in theatre.

Mitomycin C stays in the bladder for one hour and you should try not to pass urine within this time. You may be asked to lie for 15 minutes on each side (left, right, front and back) or walk around the ward in this time to allow the medication to treat the whole bladder lining.

If during this time you experience any pain or discomfort or are worried you should let a member of staff know straight away.

After the procedure

After one hour the Mitomycin C will be drained from the bladder. This will either be by the trained nurse via the catheter or if the catheter is already removed you should sit down when passing urine for the first time as this reduces the risk of splashing onto your skin or outside the toilet.

It is recommended that you wash your hands and around the genital area thoroughly with soap and water. This avoids any skin irritation that may be caused by any leftover drug in your urine.

If you are having Mitomycin C in theatre or the ward after a TURBT procedure you will stay in hospital at least overnight due to the anaesthesia. If you are having this in clinic you will be asked to remain in hospital for the hour so the nurse can monitor you.

You should double flush the toilet each time you pass urine for the next 24 hours after the procedure to ensure safe disposal.

You may be encouraged to increase your fluid intake over the next 24 hours to provide a good fluid output to wash out the bladder and reduce the likelihood of local irritation or difficulty in urination.

You are advised not to have sex for at least 24 hours after the treatment as this can cause some discomfort. Alternatively, use a condom for 24 hours following treatment to protect your partner against possible contact with the Mitomycin C drug.

If you have any pain lasting more than three days then contact your family doctor (GP). Seek immediate medical attention if you experience shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or facial swelling.

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.

Further information

For general queries about Mitomycin C contact the Urology Specialist Nurses

Tel: 0151 282 6816

Text phone number: 18001 0151 282 6816

For clinical questions specific to your case, telephone the secretary of your urology consultant.

Author: Urology Department

Review date: December 2023

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