

Adalimumab and Biosimilars Switching from Humira to Idacio

This leaflet offers more information about your medicines for your dermatological condition and our plan to switch your treatment from Humira to Idacio.

Why am I receiving this leaflet?

You are currently undergoing treatment with Adalimumab (Humira). You may be aware that the patent for **Humira** has expired and that generic versions of Adalimumab (called **biosimilar drugs**) have now been approved and are available to patients. The biosimilar version of Humira used at St George's is called **Idacio**.

What is a biosimilar?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has defined a biosimilar as **a drug that is similar in terms of quality, safety and efficacy (effectiveness) to the original licensed product**. This means that biosimilars (such as Idacio) are allowed to have small structural differences from the original licensed product (Humira) but this must not alter how well the drug works, how safe it is or how the drug reacts with the body's immune system.

Biosimilars are regulated in a similar way to the original licensed product. The European Medicines Agency has approved the use of Idacio as it has been shown to be as safe and as effective as Humira.

We are confident that Idacio is just as effective and has the same safety profile as Humira. Because Idacio offers significant cost savings we have been directed by NHS England to switch patients currently using Humira to Idacio.

What does this mean for me?

Because Idacio and Humira contain the same active product (Adalimumab), treatment for your dermatological condition remains unchanged. An information leaflet on Adalimumab is attached to this leaflet.

Like Humira, Idacio is administered by subcutaneous injection and can be given either by pre-filled pen or pre-filled syringe. You can choose which you would like. You should continue to inject Idacio as frequently as you currently inject Humira.

Idacio prescriptions and delivery to your home will be managed by a different company called Calea.

There is a dedicated switch team that will be in touch with you very shortly via telephone, to discuss any queries or concerns you may have regarding this information.

Will any additional monitoring be required?

Because Idacio has passed all necessary safety checks by the European Medicines Agency, we are not required to make any additional safety checks in patients switched to Idacio. However, to bring you peace of mind we still plan to monitor every patient who switches. You will be contacted by telephone by a member of the switch team eight weeks after you switch. This allows us to check that Idacio is working just as well as Humira and to follow up on any issues you may have encountered. If you do have a problem with Idacio, for example finding it to be less effective or experiencing difficulties with the injection device, then it may be possible to switch back to Humira.

What are the next steps?

You do not have to do anything at present. The switching team will contact you to discuss the switch with you via telephone very shortly. You should carry on using the *Humira* injections you have left at home. The new brand of Adalimumab, *Idacio*, will be delivered to you when your next delivery is due. Your next delivery date **will not** be affected by the change.

Do I get a say in whether I switch or not?

The NHS wants to share the decision making process with you in a transparent manner. This is why we are sending you this information leaflet and contacting you via telephone to discuss the switch. We are strongly recommending a switch to Idacio because it has the same efficacy record (i.e. it works just as well as Humira) and has the same safety record (i.e. it is just as safe as Humira). However, it is a fraction of the cost of Humira (i.e. it will cost the NHS a lot less to treat your condition to the same standard). The NHS wants to work constructively with patients and is open to comments, suggestions and queries. We will offer plenty of opportunity for you to offer anonymous feedback to us via a questionnaire, ask us questions via telephone and, of course, you will have the continued support of our nursing and medical teams to ensure the switch is successful.

What if I have further questions?

If you have concerns about switching to Idacio, we are here to help. There is a dedicated switching team undertaking this work that will be in touch with you shortly via telephone. Please let us know if you have any questions when we contact you.

Contact us

As always, if you have any concerns regarding any health or appointment issues, please continue to contact the dermatology team via the usual route on: skin.cns@stgeorges.nhs.uk

As stated above, the switching team will be in touch with you very shortly so please **do not** contact the dermatology team about the switch as unfortunately they will be unable to respond to individual queries.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: DER_AAB_01 Published: March 2021 Review date: March 2023