

# Listeria Advice for Patients taking Lemtrada (Alemtuzumab)

**This leaflet aims to answer your questions about taking Lemtrada (Alemtuzumab) and to reduce your risk of Listeria infection. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## **What is Listeria and what is the risk?**

Listeria monocytogenes (Listeria) is a bacterium that causes an illness called listeriosis. Cases of foodborne illness from Listeria are rare but can involve serious symptoms and even death in certain groups of people. These include people with a weakened immune system such as multiple sclerosis, pregnant women and their unborn babies, new-born babies and elderly people.

## **The types of food in which Listeria can be found**

Cooked sliced meats, cured meats, smoked fish, cooked shellfish, blue veined and mould-ripened soft cheeses, pâté, ready-made sandwiches and salads.

## **What you can do to avoid Listeria**

To reduce the risk of Listeria when preparing food at home, it is important to:

- keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate to avoid cross-contamination
- wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly
- keep chilled ready-to-eat foods cold – make sure your refrigerator is working properly and is set to 5°C or below

- always use foods by their use-by-date
- follow the storage instructions on the label and use opened foods within two days unless instructions on the packaging say otherwise
- eat ready-to-eat food within four hours of being taken out of the refrigerator
- cook or reheat foods until they are piping hot throughout
- ensure that you follow manufacturer's instructions in the preparation of all foods
- ensure you wash your hands properly before handling food.

### **Useful sources of information**

Food Standards Agency

<https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/listeria>

### **Contact us**

If you have any questions or concerns about Listeria and Alemtuzumab, please contact the MS Nursing team: Sarah White on 020 8725 4111, Maria Vega Sota on 020 8725 4469 or Sophia Starke/Helen Davies on 020 8266 6528 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). Out of hours, please leave a message or contact your out of hours GP service if your symptoms become worse.

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

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## 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](mailto: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](http://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 our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://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.



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