

Information about

Tocilizumab and Sarilumab for COVID-19

We use Tocilizumab and Sarilumab in the treatment of COVID. In some people these medicines can help to improve survival and recovery time from COVID-19 pneumonia. We have given you one of these medicines during your illness.

How do these drugs work and possible side effects?

Both Tocilizumab and Sarilumab work by suppressing or “dampening down” your immune system to prevent damage to your lungs. Because of this there may be an increased risk of other infections for a short time. Your blood tests and some of the signs and markers of infection or inflammation in your system may not be normal for up to 4 weeks after these medicines have been given to you.

We will tell your doctor that you have been given either of these medicines. They may not be familiar with these medicines so it is important that they know that blood tests for signs of infection may not rise as usual for a few weeks after the treatment, even if you have an infection. After a month there should not be any ongoing effect on your blood tests or immune system.

Important Advice

If you become unwell in the month after getting either of these medicines, let your doctor or healthcare worker know you were given these medicines.

For women, we advise that you should not get pregnant within 3 months of taking Tocilizumab or Sarilumab. Please discuss contraception with your General Practitioner (GP) or sexual health advisor if needed.