

## Approved treatments for wet macular degeneration

This information outlines the NICE approved treatments for wet macular degeneration. If you have any queries, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

NICE, an NHS guidance body, has approved so far two treatments for wet macular degeneration, Ranibizumab (Lucentis) and Aflibercept (Eylea).

Extensive research has shown that Ranibizumab and Aflibercept are equally effective treatments for wet macular degeneration. However, the medications do vary in the way they are given.

### Treatment regimes: the differences

**Both Ranibizumab and Aflibercept** initially require 3 injections, each a month apart. This is called the 'loading phase' of treatment.

**Ranibizumab** then requires monthly reviews with an injection if required.

**Aflibercept** requires 2-monthly reviews and injection at each of these visits. **This is for Year 1 only.**

**In Year 2** patients receiving Aflibercept will be followed up in a different method, called **Treat and Extend**. Every time they come to the clinic they will be assessed and if there is no disease activity they will still have an injection but the next appointment will be **extended by 2 weeks** than their previous one, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. If there is disease activity, they have also an injection but their next

follow up is **reduced by 2 weeks** than their previous one (minimum follow up is four weeks).

So the difference of the 2 treatment protocols **in Year 2** is that with **Ranibizumab** the patients need to come every month to the clinic and they may or may not have an injection on the same day, whereas with the **Aflibercept** the patients have an injection every time they come to the clinic but their next follow up is extended or reduced by 2 weeks according to disease activity.

If you are already receiving Ranibizumab treatment we would generally recommend continuing with this treatment. If your doctor does not think you are responding to this treatment then changing to Aflibercept may be an option. Some patients may respond to Aflibercept when they haven't responded to Ranibizumab and vice-versa.

### Choice of treatments

If you are a new patient who has been diagnosed with wet macular degeneration affecting your first eye, with no treatment previously given, you have a choice of either receiving Aflibercept or Ranibizumab.

Your doctor will give you guidance in making this choice. The main differences are that in the **first year** you will have less appointments but probably more injections with Aflibercept whereas with Ranibizumab you will have more appointments but, on average, less injections.

	<u>Visits</u>	<u>Injections</u>
<u>Ranibizumab</u>	Up to 12	6 on average
<u>Aflibercept</u>	7	7

### Contact details

If you have got a minor eye problem, please seek advice from your GP, optician or pharmacist. If you think your problem might be urgent, please attend Eye Casualty.

Eye Casualty (Reading):	Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat & Sun & bank holidays 9am-12.30pm; Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day
Eye Casualty: Prince Charles Eye Unit (Windsor):	Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat 9am-12.30pm; Closed Sun & bank holidays

Outside Eye Casualty hours you should telephone your GP's out of hours service or if you have serious concerns, visit your nearest Emergency Department (A&E).

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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