

KNOWN RISKS OF INTRAVITREAL INJECTIONS

- ▶ You may not benefit from this drug.
- ▶ Any medication has the potential to cause allergic reactions including: rash, hives, itching, shortness of breath and, rarely, death. If you have drug or food allergies, let your Ophthalmologist know.
- ▶ Possible complications of the administration of the drug may include:
 - retinal detachment
 - cataract formation
 - glaucoma
 - increased pressure in the eye
 - damage to the cornea or retina
 - bleeding
 - severe eye infection
- ▶ Less severe side effects may include*:
 - eye pain
 - bloodshot eye
 - floaters
 - swelling of the cornea
 - irritation/inflammation of the eye
 - visual disturbances

* These side effects are related to the actual procedure and will subside with time.

ALTERNATIVES

- ▶ You do not have to receive treatment for macular degeneration, but you will lose vision very quickly without treatment.
- ▶ Other treatments offered in Manitoba are Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) with a drug called Visudyne and PDT with Kenalog injections.
- ▶ Macugen is another drug approved specifically for the treatment of macular degeneration but is currently not funded for use in Manitoba. You would have to go out of province for this treatment.

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Avastin™ Injections

Patient Information about Avastin™
Injections for the Treatment of
Macular Degeneration



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PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- ▶ Prior to starting treatment with Avastin™ you will be required to sign a consent form indicating you are aware of the nature, risks and benefits of the treatment and that the treatment is currently classified as “off label.”
- ▶ After the injection, contact your Ophthalmologist if any of the following occurs:
 - pain
 - blurry or decreased vision
 - sensitivity to light
 - continued redness of the eye
 - discharge from the eye
- ▶ You will not rub your treated eye or swim for three days after each injection.
- ▶ You will follow up with your Ophthalmologist as scheduled.
- ▶ You will call your family doctor or proceed to an Emergency Department immediately if you experience any of the following:
 - pain associated with constipation and vomiting
 - abnormal bleeding
 - severe headache
 - slurred speech
 - weakness on one side of the body
- ▶ You will inform your Ophthalmologist if you need any type of surgery and you will inform your surgeon (including dentists) that you are receiving Avastin™.

Dr. Name: _____

Dr. Phone No: _____

Next Appointment: _____

Eye Injected: Left / Right

“OFF LABEL” STATUS OF AVASTIN™

- ▶ Avastin™ was initially approved by the Food and Drug Administration and Health Canada for treatment of colon cancer.
- ▶ By blocking a substance known as vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), Avastin™ prevents further growth of abnormal cells.
- ▶ Since VEGF is one of the causes of abnormal vessels, Ophthalmologists are using Avastin™ “off label” (rather than the purpose it was designed for) to treat macular degeneration.
- ▶ The treatment is based on firm scientific methods and sound medical evidence.

POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS

- ▶ The goal of treatment is to prevent further loss of vision.
- ▶ The medication may not restore vision that is already lost and may not prevent further loss of vision.

METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION

- ▶ After the pupil is dilated and the eye is numbed with an anesthetic, the medication is injected into the vitreous (the jelly-like substance in the back chamber of the eye).
- ▶ Avastin™ is administered at regular intervals; your Ophthalmologist will tell you how often and for how long you will receive treatments.



POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- ▶ When given for colon cancer, some patients experience serious events such as gastrointestinal perforations, wound healing complications, hemorrhage, stroke, heart attack, hypertension, proteinuria and congestive heart failure.
- ▶ Keep in mind these patients not only have a life-threatening disease, but have been given 400 times the dose as is given for macular degeneration and the drug is spread throughout their entire body in the blood stream.
- ▶ Patients receiving Avastin™ for eye conditions are generally healthier than cancer patients, and receive a significantly lower dose. The full benefits and risks of intravitreal (an injection into the eye) Avastin™ are not yet known but coincidental problems may occur such as increased risk for heart attack or stroke in diabetic patients.