

Triamcinolone acetonide (TAC) for keloid scars

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about triamcinolone acetonide (TAC) injections for treatment of your keloid scar. It explains the benefits and risks to this procedure, as well as what to expect when you come to hospital.

Patients with keloid scars can either be treated in the dermatology department or the plastic surgery department. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is triamcinolone acetonide (TAC)?

TAC is a corticosteroid. It is injected subcutaneously (under the skin of the keloid) and may help to reduce the size and symptoms of the keloid. These injections are safe, as very little steroid gets into the body.

What are the benefits and why should I have TAC injections?

TAC injections may help to flatten the keloid scar. It also helps to reduce symptoms such as itching and pain in the scar. You may receive treatment every four to six weeks until the maximum benefit is obtained.

Are there any side effects?

Side effects of TAC injections may include localised thinning of the skin, slight changes in skin colour around the site of injection or deposits of steroid in the form of small white flecks in the scar. These changes are temporary but they may take some time to disappear.

With this treatment very little steroid is absorbed into the body and should not cause swelling of the face that is usually seen with this type of medication when used at high doses for long periods. Please tell your doctor immediately if you get severe pain in your abdomen, facial swelling or an unexpected rash.

You should not receive this medication if you have ever had an allergic reaction to triamcinolone or if you are suffering from an infection, unless you are being treated for the infection and your doctor feels it is safe to continue TAC treatment.

Is there anything else I should discuss with my doctor before receiving TAC injection?

Please notify the doctor if you are pregnant, breast feeding or have had any of the following conditions: tuberculosis (TB), bowel disorders, an ulcer, blood clots, cancer, thin (brittle) bones, high blood pressure or heart failure, mental disorders, epilepsy, myasthenia gravis or glaucoma (increased pressure in your eyes).

What happens during my treatment?

You will be asked to lie down on a couch in a comfortable position. The scar area will be exposed and cleaned with a skin cleanser. A small amount of corticosteroid will be injected into the affected scar. The amount of injections given will be in proportion to the size of the scar.

Will I feel any pain?

The treatment can be painful initially but this soon settles. Taking paracetamol half an hour before the treatment can help.

What happens after the treatment?

A plaster will be applied over the treated area if necessary.

What do I need to do after I go home?

Treat the affected area as normal. No changes to your normal habits are necessary.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

Follow up appointments will be arranged on the day of treatment and are approximately six weeks apart. Repeat treatments are usually necessary. After six treatments you will automatically be referred for a medical review. Some individuals will need less than six treatments, but if you require more, treatment can continue after your medical review.

Who should I contact if I have any questions about my treatment with TAC injections?

Dermatology patients only – Please ring **020 7188 6284**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and leave a message, your name and contact number on the answer phone. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Plastic surgery patients only – Please ring **020 7188 2503**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and leave a message, your name and contact number on the answer phone. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Please note that these are not emergency numbers. In an emergency please contact your GP or your local accident and emergency (A&E) department.

Further sources of information

Pharmacy medicines helpline

For information about any medicines that you have been prescribed at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals, you can speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' t: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC)

For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.

t: 020 7188 3416

Language support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS Direct

Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 0845 4647 **w:** www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

t: 0848 143 4017 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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