

Atopic eczema: pharmacist led clinic

Information for patients

Why are you seeing a pharmacist?

You have been diagnosed with eczema by a doctor. Your dermatologist would like to start you on one of three medicines commonly used for patients with significant inflammatory skin conditions, such as eczema.

These medicines are **ciclosporin**, **methotrexate** and **azathioprine**. Your dermatologist may have discussed more than one of these options with you at a previous appointment and arranged for some background investigations (e.g. blood tests or blood pressure checks) to be carried out before seeing one of the specialist dermatology pharmacists.

Pharmacists are medication experts. They will help you make informed decisions regarding your treatment and ensure that it is safe and appropriate for you. They will monitor you during the treatment and provide advice should you experience any side effects. You will also have regular appointments with your dermatologist during the treatment.

The role of pharmacists in your journey

Once you have agreed to begin systemic eczema treatment (oral tablets or capsules) with your dermatologist, our clinical pharmacists will help you begin your treatment with the most appropriate medicine following a review of any prior investigations or tests.

The pharmacist will provide information on the medicine before it is prescribed. This will include how to take it, any potential side-effects, required monitoring and vaccination advice. They will also ensure that your new eczema treatment does not interact with any other medicine(s) you take.

The pharmacist will then organise routine monitoring in the form of blood tests for you, either through your GP or in clinic. You will have a telephone review with the pharmacist a few weeks after starting the treatment, and they will work with your dermatologist to determine the next steps for your treatment.

If appropriate your pharmacist will ask your GP to start prescribing the new eczema treatment for you.

What are the benefits?

- ✓ Your pharmacist will work as part of the eczema team to help decide the most suitable treatment option for you
- ✓ Your pharmacist will be able to provide further information on each medicine, such as how to take it and potential side-effects
- ✓ Your pharmacist will ensure that your new eczema treatment does not interact with other medicines that you may take
- ✓ When you first start treatment your pharmacist will review your blood test results regularly to ensure that your treatment is safe
- ✓ Your pharmacist will speak to your dermatology consultant should any complications arise as they are part of the same dermatology clinical team

- ✓ Your pharmacist will also communicate regularly with your GP in order to keep them up to date with the progress of your treatment, changes or monitoring requirements for your treatment.

Who will supply your medication?

Initially you will be given an 8 week supply of your new medicine from the clinic. Medication will be supplied from the clinic pharmacy or your GP can prescribe it for you depending on how well you respond to treatment.

Long-term monitoring and management

Once you are stable on treatment your GP may be able to issue prescriptions so you can obtain a supply from your local community pharmacy. If this is the case they will also be responsible for taking and monitoring your bloods from time to time.

This will enable you to access your medication more easily and make routine blood checks more convenient. Blood tests and other monitoring are important to optimise the safety and effectiveness of your medicine(s).

If you experience any issues getting a blood test at your GP surgery please contact your consultant's secretary.

Regardless of where you get your blood tests and prescriptions, the dermatology team will be responsible for aspects of your care and will require you to attend clinic appointments at regular intervals. If you do not attend the clinic appointments, your treatment may be stopped.

If you have any further questions about your treatment or how the clinic works, please do not hesitate to contact the pharmacy or clinic reception.

Contact details

Dermatology (First Floor)
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Lauriston Place
Edinburgh, EH3 9HA

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