

**Collagenase (Xiaflex®) injection for Dupuytren's contracture in the hands**

This patient information is for a new collagenase (Xiaflex®) injection for Dupuytren's contracture in the hands that has been approved for introduction at Frankston Hospital. Associate Professors David Hunter-Smith and Warren Rozen have recommended collagenase (Xiaflex®) injections for the contracture in your hand for the treatment of your Dupuytren's disease. It is your decision whether to go ahead with the procedure. This document gives you information about the reasons, benefits and risks of the procedure so that you can make an informed decision. We have also enclosed a Patient Guide booklet provided by Actelion Pharmaceuticals as additional information. Please note that some of the information in this booklet may vary from the information provided in this letter.

**Introduction**

Collagenase injection is a relatively new non-invasive procedure where a small amount of collagenase (< 0.5) is injected into the hand to dissolve the contracture cords. Collagenase is an enzyme produced by a type of bacteria. The injection is made with a small syringe and a tiny needle.

**Who is this information for?**

This information is for patients who have Dupuytren's disease with contracture cords and are considering undergoing the above procedure.

**What are the benefits of collagenase (Xiaflex®) injection for Dupuytren's contracture in the hands?**

- Non-invasive
- Avoidance of open surgery
- Faster recovery time, including earlier return to work and normal daily activities.

**Are there any alternatives to collagenase injection?**

The current treatment is a surgical procedure, usually under a general anaesthetic or an arm block. The operation is called a fasciotomy, and skin grafting and skin flaps may be needed. The need for skin grafts and flaps depends on the severity of the Dupuytren's contracture.

**What will happen if I decide not to have Xiaflex, but continue with the surgical approach?**

You will remain on the waiting list under category 2 semi-urgent. This means that the waiting time will be greater than 6 months for an open surgical procedure.

**What does the procedure involve?**

There will be a consultation with your doctor followed by a collagenase injection (under local anaesthetic block) of the contracture cords with a small needle. The injection and consultation will take approximately 20 minutes.

Seven days following the injection, a follow-up manipulation of the hand is performed; this takes about 20 minutes however you will be in the ward for approx. 2 hours. You will be required to attend a hand Occupational Therapy appointment the following day and another Outpatient consultation the following week. Therefore the treatment is over 3 consecutive weeks.



### **Information for patients, family and carers**

Consultation appointments and the (Xiaflex®) injection occur in the Outpatient clinic. The manipulation procedure is completed as an admitted patient in the infusion centre. If the condition affects both hands, only one hand will be treated at any one time, and that is determined on case by-case basis. We recommend that you organise someone to drive you to your appointments for the injection and manipulation.

### **What should I do about my medication(s)?**

There are no restrictions. You may continue to take all medication(s) as instructed by your treating doctor.

### **What are the complications?**

Some bruising and swelling in the hand after the injection can be expected and this may last for several days. There may be a small skin tear following the manipulation which is treated with a simple dressing. Sometimes you may feel an itchy sensation on the skin and have a rash following the injection, which is managed by your treating doctor. The more serious complication is damage to the flexor tendon or severe allergy to the drug. This type of complication is very rare (1 in 20,000) If a tendon injury occurred a surgical repair would be required in the operating theatre. The overall recurrence rate of disease after collagenase treatment is reported to be almost equivalent to surgery. If the disease recurs, then patient can have either another treatment with Xiaflex or surgery.

### **How soon will I recover?**

You will be able to resume normal activities such as driving and going back to work in approximately two weeks. There should be a significant improvement in functional ability and range of movement, which is comparative to that experienced with surgery. There will be follow-up consultations at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.

### **Summary**

The treatment is a low-risk, non-invasive procedure by injection and hand manipulation for Dupuytren's contracture. Patients treated by this technique also experience a shorter recovery (i.e. 2 weeks) as compared to recovery (i.e. 4 weeks) from invasive surgical procedure.