

IXEKIZUMAB (TALTZ)

Ixekizumab (Taltz) is a promising new treatment approved for psoriasis. It is one of the new classes of drug called biologics. These drugs are engineered from proteins produced by living cells. This medication specifically targets a substance called IL-17A, which is responsible for producing much of the inflammation, redness, and scaling of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

In the past, psoriasis was treated with either local treatment, such as creams or ointments, or whole body treatment, such as phototherapy or oral medications. In many cases, these treatments were effective, but in many cases are not successful or produce side effects.

Medications which block the IL-17 pathway are a major advance in psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis treatment. This appears to be the main pathway that drives psoriasis. Initial findings suggest these are the most effective medications ever developed for psoriasis and as a bonus have extremely few side effects.

Ixekizumab is a medication that is self-injected once or twice per month. The administration is quite easy to perform and we will instruct you on the proper way to do this. All of the materials for injection are supplied with the prescription.

Before the treatment is started, a PPD test may need to be performed on the skin of your arm. This is a test which detects prior exposure to tuberculosis. If this test has not been done already, it can easily be performed in our office. Although there have not been any problems, there is a chance that ixekizumab can have effects on your blood, liver, and kidney, and thus blood tests are periodically monitored.

Side effects of the medication are rare, with the majority being mild in intensity. The most common side effects include diarrhea and cold-like symptoms. As with any medication, there are potential allergic reactions. Because ixekizumab works on areas of the immune system, there are theoretical risks for increased infections and lymphoma. This requires you to be aware of your general health and report any problems, such as a lingering cold or fever. There have been reports of worsening Crohn's disease / Ulcerative colitis in people taking ixekizumab, so please let me know if you have ever had this condition. The cap of the medication contains latex, so please also let me know if you have a latex allergy.

Ixekizumab is a medication which is a major advance over the previous treatments for psoriasis. It seems to work better than the conventional treatments with fewer side effects. If you have any further questions regarding this medication, please ask me before you leave the office.