

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

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# Aflibercept biosimilar

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### What is aflibercept?

Aflibercept is a medicine that is injected into the eye. Doctors use it to treat eye problems that can cause blurry or poor eyesight. These include:

- Wet age-related macular degeneration
- Swelling in the eye caused by blocked veins
- Eye damage caused by diabetes
- Eye problems caused by severe short-sightedness

### How does aflibercept work?

Sometimes, tiny blood vessels grow in the eye when they should not. These blood vessels can leak or bleed and damage your sight.

Aflibercept stops these unhealthy blood vessels from growing. This helps protect your eyesight and may even make it better.

### What kind of medicine is aflibercept?

Aflibercept is a **biological medicine**. This means it is made using living cells. These types of medicines have been used in the UK for over 20 years and have helped millions of people.

### Are there other medicines like aflibercept?

Yes. Other similar medicines include ranibizumab, brolucizumab, bevacizumab and faricimab. Your eye doctor will talk with you and decide which medicine is best for your eyes.

### What is biosimilar aflibercept?

At first, only one company made aflibercept. Now, other companies make a very similar version called a **biosimilar**.

### Are biosimilars safe?

Yes. In the UK, medicines are checked by an organisation called the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Biosimilar medicines must pass the same strict safety and quality tests as the original medicine.

### What does this mean for your treatment?

Whether you start aflibercept for the first time or change from the original brand (called Eylea) to a biosimilar, you should get the same results.

All types of aflibercept can have similar side effects. If you notice any problems, tell your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist as soon as possible.

### **Why are biosimilars important?**

Biological medicines can be very expensive. Biosimilars cost less but work just as well. Because they cost less, the NHS can treat more patients and spend money on new medicines to improve care.

### **Need more help?**

If you have further questions about aflibercept or biosimilars, then please speak to a member of your ophthalmology or pharmacy team.

### **Further sources of information:**

- The Macular Society website: [www.macularsociety.org/support/](http://www.macularsociety.org/support/)
- NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)
- Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

### **Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

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If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

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