

The Edinburgh Lung Fibrosis clinic: Patient Information on Drugs for IPF

Pirfenidone (Esbriet)

How does it work?

It is not a cure but slows down disease progression by preventing certain cells in your body from producing more scar tissue. Not all patients will respond to pirfenidone.

Will I feel better?

Studies have not shown any strong evidence that Pirfenidone improves quality of life.

Will I live longer?

Studies have shown Pirfenidone reduces the rate of decline of lung function and you may live longer because the lungs are declining more slowly

What are the side effects?

The most common side effect are skin rash when exposed to sunlight, tiredness, nausea, diarrhoea and weight loss. Around 20-40% of patients have side-effects

How often do I take it?

Three tablets, 3 times a day with meals. The dose will be increased every 2 weeks until you reach the recommended dose. The dose can be temporarily reduced if there are side-effects

Will I need more blood tests?

Your medical team will arrange for you to have regular blood tests to monitor your liver function. This medication can affect your liver function but this is usually reversible by discontinuing the medication.

Will I be reviewed again in clinic?

The effect of this medication will be reviewed after 3-6 months. We will do breathing tests in clinic.

Could I try one drug and switch over to another if the drug doesn't work for me?

Yes

Nintedanib (Ofev)

How does it work?

It is not a cure but slows down disease progression by preventing certain cells in your body from producing more scar tissue. Not all patients will respond to nintedanib

Will I feel better?

Studies have not shown any strong evidence that Nintedanib improves quality of life

Will I live longer?

Studies have shown Nintedanib reduces the rate of decline of lung function and you may live longer because the lungs are declining more slowly

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects are diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal discomfort. Around 20-40% of patients have side-effects

How often do I take it?

One tablet 2 times a day. The dose can be reduced if there are side-effects

Will I need more blood tests?

Your medical team will arrange for you to have regular blood tests to monitor your liver function. This medication can affect your liver function but this is usually reversible by discontinuing the medication.

Will I be reviewed again in clinic?

The effect of this medication will be reviewed after 3-6 months. We will do breathing tests in clinic.

Could I try one drug and switch over to another if the drug doesn't work for me?

Yes

Note certain medical conditions (e.g. severe liver disease, kidney and heart disease) may prevent patients from taking one or other these medications.

Most of your usual medication do not interact with these drugs, but ask the doctor. Tell the doctor if you are on blood thinning treatment. You should not smoke if you are on these medications.

Not every patient will respond to the drugs. If you decline despite taking the drugs, we would advice stopping the medication