How is daratumumab given?
Daratumumab is given by intravenous infusion (into a vein) over a number of hours.
Daratumumab is given as a continuous treatment, meaning it is given until the myeloma shows signs it is beginning to come back.

- Daratumumab is usually given once a week for the first 8 weeks, once every two weeks from week 9 to week 24, and then every 4 weeks from week 25.
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Other information about daratumumab
- Women of child-bearing potential should use effective contraception while receiving daratumumab and for three months afterwards.
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What is daratumumab?
Daratumumab, also known as Darzalex®, is a monoclonal antibody drug used in the treatment of myeloma.

How does it work?
Daratumumab works by attaching to a protein that is present on the surface of myeloma cells. Myeloma cells produce a protein called CD38 which is present on the surface of myeloma cells, which flags the cell, enabling the immune system to target and kill it.

Possible side effects
Daratumumab has a number of possible side effects which can vary considerably from patient to patient. It is important to report any side effects to your doctor or nurse so they can be treated or managed promptly.

**Peripheral neuropathy**
Peripheral neuropathy is damage to the nerves in the hands, feet, arms or legs. This can lead to numbness, tingling, increased sensitivity and pain, most often in the feet or hands.
For the majority of patients, symptoms will improve or disappear after the dose and/or frequency of administration of daratumumab is reduced. However, for some, daratumumab may need to be temporarily stopped or discontinued and other options discussed. If you have severe peripheral neuropathy you may not be able to have other treatments in the future that are also known to cause peripheral neuropathy.

Pain and discomfort due to peripheral neuropathy can often be alleviated by gentle massage, taking warm baths, using heat/cold packs and specific nerve painkillers, such as gabapentin and pregabalin.

**Infusion reaction**
The most commonly observed side effect of daratumumab is an infusion reaction, which most often occurs within three to four hours of receiving the infusion. Symptoms can include a throat tickle, cough, fever, chills, nausea, changes in blood pressure, flushing, rash and fatigue. You will be given supportive treatment alongside the daratumumab infusion to try to reduce the risk of an infusion reaction occurring. If you notice any of these side effects, report them to your doctor or nurse immediately. You will need to have further treatment to stop the reaction.

**Low blood counts**
Daratumumab can reduce the number of red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets in your blood. This can cause anaemia and fatigue, as well as making you more susceptible to infection and increasing your risk of bleeding.

If necessary, you can be given supportive treatment to help with these side effects and to boost your blood cell counts.

**Fatigue**
Fatigue usually resolves shortly after treatment has finished. There are a number of medical and non-medical ways to help manage fatigue. For example, treatment for anaemia may reduce fatigue if it is caused by low red blood cell counts. Increasing your levels of activity and having complementary therapies such as aromatherapy or massage may also help.

**Gastrointestinal disturbances**
Daratumumab can cause diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. While usually mild and easily manageable, these side effects can become problematic for some patients. Maintaining a good fluid intake and a balanced diet is important in the management of gastrointestinal disturbances. Your doctor may prescribe specific treatment which can help prevent or control the symptoms.

**Fluid retention**
Fluid retention can cause swelling of the hands, ankles or feet (peripheral oedema). Your doctor will discuss a treatment plan for your fluid retention with you. This will usually involve taking diuretics (water tablets) to help your body remove the excessive fluid.

**Headache**
Daratumumab can cause headaches. Maintain a good fluid intake and speak to your doctor about suitable painkillers.

**Muscle spasms**
Muscle spasms or cramps can be a side effect of daratumumab. There are a number of medical and non-medical strategies you may try to manage this. Some non-medical strategies include keeping well hydrated, stretching and drinking tonic water or sports drinks, which anecdotal evidence suggests may help to ease cramping. Your doctor may prescribe specific treatment which can help prevent or control the symptoms.

**Fever**
Daratumumab can cause an increase in body temperature. This should last no more than 24 hours. If this raised temperature continues, it may be a symptom of infection and you should inform your healthcare team as soon as possible.
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If you have any questions about your treatment, speak to your medical team. They are the best people to ask if you have questions about your individual situation. The information in this publication is not meant to replace their advice.

We appreciate your feedback
Please fill in a short online survey about our patient information at myeloma.org.uk/pifeedback or email any comments to myelomauk@myeloma.org.uk

Visit our website at myeloma.org.uk

For a list of references used to develop our resources, visit myeloma.org.uk/references

Daratumumab (Darzalex®)

Treatment Guide

We're here for everything a diagnosis of myeloma brings
Get in touch to find out more about how we can support you
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Email Ask the Nurse at AskTheNurse@myeloma.org.uk
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We're here for everything a diagnosis of myeloma brings

Get in touch to find out more about how we can support you

Call the Myeloma Infoline on 0800 980 3332

Email Ask the Nurse at AskTheNurse@myeloma.org.uk

Visit our website at myeloma.org.uk

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We appreciate your feedback

Please fill in a short online survey about our patient information at myeloma.org.uk/pifeedback or email any comments to myelomauk@myeloma.org.uk

For a list of references used to develop our resources, visit myeloma.org.uk/references