



Patient & Family Guide  
2016

# Vedolizumab (Entyvio<sup>®</sup>) Therapy



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# Vedolizumab (Entyvio®) Therapy

You have been given this pamphlet because your healthcare provider believes treatment with a medicine called vedolizumab may help to manage your inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), ulcerative colitis, or Crohn's disease. The brand name for vedolizumab is Entyvio®.

In this pamphlet you will find information about vedolizumab to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to use this treatment. This pamphlet does not take the place of any information or instructions your healthcare provider gives you.

## **What is vedolizumab?**

Vedolizumab specifically targets the chronic inflammation (swelling) in your gastrointestinal (GI) tract. At the time this pamphlet was written, vedolizumab is the only IBD treatment that worked towards controlling inflammation.

## **Who can take it?**

Vedolizumab is prescribed to adults with moderate to severe IBD when other medicines have not worked well or cannot be taken.

Vedolizumab can reduce symptoms, achieve and maintain remission, and reduce or end the use of corticosteroids.

## **How does it work?**

In the body, white blood cells go to different tissues as part of your natural immune response to fight infections in your body. When you have IBD, your immune system cannot tell the difference between foreign substances (from outside your body) and your body's own tissues. Inflammation and other symptoms of IBD are caused by an increased number of white blood cells entering your GI tract, causing both your inflammation and symptoms. Vedolizumab works to block those white cell movements into the GI tract, helping to control your inflammation and symptoms.

## **How is vedolizumab given?**

Vedolizumab is given by intravenous (IV) infusion, through a small flexible tube inserted (put) into one of your arm's veins. Once the IV is in place, the infusion takes about 30 minutes. When you start treatment, infusions will be given at weeks 0, 2, and 6, followed by infusions every 8 weeks. The infusions will take place at a private infusion clinic in your area. There is no cost to you for the infusions.

Your healthcare provider will assess your response to therapy and need for continued treatment.

We will monitor you during and after every infusion to see if you experience any side effects. Every time you have an infusion at the clinic, a report will be sent to your healthcare provider with your weight, dose, and information on how you are doing. Any side effects will be treated right away as needed. It is important to tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects at any time during your treatment. Possible side effects are listed later in this pamphlet.

## **Precautions before you start vedolizumab**

- You will have a tuberculosis (TB) skin test, chest X-ray, and blood work to check for TB or other active infections.
- Your healthcare provider may suggest you update your vaccinations, which may include tetanus, varicella (chicken pox), or pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccines.
- If you are due for vaccinations or plan to be vaccinated, tell your healthcare provider.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any other health problems you have, as vedolizumab may make them worse.
- Have regular blood work and check-ups with your healthcare provider.

## **What side effects can vedolizumab cause?**

Like any medicine, vedolizumab has possible side effects.

An allergic reaction to vedolizumab can happen while you are getting an infusion or several hours after. You may need treatment if you have an allergic reaction.

**Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have any of the following symptoms during or after the infusion such as:**

- Rash
- Itching
- Swelling of your lips, tongue, throat, or face
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Wheezing
- Dizziness
- Feeling hot
- Palpitations (feeling like your heart is racing)

Vedolizumab may increase your risk of getting a serious infection. Avoid being near people who are sick and wash your hands often if you are around people who have been sick. Tell your healthcare provider if you have ever had an infection that would not go away or an infection that kept coming back.

**BEFORE your infusion, tell your healthcare provider if you think you have an infection or any of the following symptoms:**

- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Red or painful skin or sores
- Tiredness
- Pain when urinating (peeing)

**Liver problems can happen when taking vedolizumab. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any of these symptoms:**

- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Pain on the right side of your abdomen (stomach area)
- Dark urine (pee)
- Yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any of these common side effects:**

- Common cold
- Headache
- Joint pain
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
- Fever
- Infections of the nose or throat
- Tiredness
- Cough
- Bronchitis
- Flu
- Back pain
- Rash
- Itching
- Sinus infection
- Throat pain

Vedolizumab may increase your risk of getting a rare brain infection called progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you have back pain, blurred vision, confusion, dizziness, drowsiness, a fever, a headache, seizures, unusual tiredness or weakness.**



## **Pregnancy and breastfeeding**

- Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- It is not known if vedolizumab will harm your unborn baby.
- Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant while receiving vedolizumab.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.
- It is not known if vedolizumab passes into your breast milk.
- You and your healthcare provider will need to talk about the potential benefits and risks before you take this medicine while pregnant or breastfeeding.

## Important

- Always talk about other medicines with your healthcare provider. This includes prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines and herbal or vitamin supplements.
- It is very important that your healthcare provider check your progress at regular visits to make sure this medicine is working properly. Regular blood tests may be needed when taking this medicine to monitor your health.
- **If you notice any side effects or side effects that do not go away, it is important to tell your healthcare provider right away** so adjustments can be made. Usually, symptoms of side effects can be controlled with other medicines, but lowering your vedolizumab dose or stopping treatment may be needed.

**If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.**

**We are here to help you.**

# Notes:

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### Looking for more health information?

This pamphlet and all our active patient pamphlets are searchable here:

<http://bit.ly/NSHApamphlets>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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**Nova Scotia Health Authority**

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The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute healthcare or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.