Department of Nephrology/Pharmacy

Hepatitis B vaccination (Fendrix®)

What is Fendrix® and what does it do?
Fendrix® is a vaccine which prevents hepatitis B disease in patients with renal diseases who are likely to need dialysis in the future. Fendrix® has been developed for renal patients with a reduced immune system.

Hepatitis B is a virus which affects the liver and it is transferred by blood and other bodily fluids of infected people.

Why do I need to be immunised against hepatitis B?
Before starting dialysis all patients are immunised against hepatitis B following national guidelines. This is because dialysis, especially haemodialysis, involves blood and so there is a risk of transfer of infection. All dialysis patients (including those who are to receive peritoneal dialysis (PD) and staff are immunised against hepatitis B infection for everyone’s safety.

How do I arrange my Fendrix® injections?
Before it is time for you to start to receive dialysis your doctor or specialist nurse will write to your GP and let them know that you need to be immunised against hepatitis B with a course of Fendrix® injections.

You will also receive a letter at the same time to let you know that you will need to book an appointment to receive your first injection. The letter will explain who you need to contact to make the appointment.

How often do I need to have Fendrix® injections?
Hepatitis B immunisation with Fendrix® means that you will need to have four injections over six months. The injections are given:

- **First injection**: When you make your first appointment to have your first injection.
- **Second injection**: One month after your first injection.
- **Third injection**: Two months after your first injection.
- **Fourth injection**: Six months after your first injection.

If you miss an injection talk to your GP or practice nurse as soon as possible to arrange another visit.
Make sure that you complete the course of four injections – if not you may not be fully immunised against hepatitis B.

However, if you need to start to receive dialysis before you have received all four Fendrix® injections this will not mean that you cannot receive dialysis but you should still complete the Fendrix® injections course.

Do I need to have any tests or be monitored because I am receiving Fendrix® injections?

Six to eight weeks after completing your course of Fendrix® injections your blood will be check in clinic to make sure you have a good level of immunity to hepatitis B. Once the result of this blood test is returned, your doctor or clinic nurse will let you know if you need to have any further injections or any booster doses in the future.

Are there any side effects?

The most common side effect seen with Fendrix® injection is pain or discomfort at the injection site which should stop soon after the injection.

Other side effects which you may experience for a short time after receiving an injection include headache, tiredness, a high temperature or stomach ache.

Special warnings or precautions you need to be aware of

If you have ever had an allergic reaction to any vaccine you should let your doctor or specialist nurse know before having your first injection of Fendrix®.

If you have had, or have an infection with a high temperature within a few days of your appointment for any of the four doses of Fendrix® you should postpone having the injection until you have fully recovered. Please discuss this with your doctor or practice nurse.

If you have received other immunisation injections or expect to do so soon you should not start to receive Fendrix® until two to three weeks after you have completed these immunisations.

Further information

If you have any other questions about your medication, please contact the medicines helpline on 01223 217502.
We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Help with this leaflet:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Document history
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