

# Staffordshire Eye Clinic

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## Is Avastin suitable for you?

### Avastin

Avastin (bevacizumab) is licensed for use in intestinal cancer and use in the eye is off label. Avastin has many similarities to Lucentis and many ophthalmologists believe it may be similarly effective. However, despite widespread use, it has not undergone the same clinical trials.

### **Special Concerns with Avastin?**

#### **'Off-label'**

Avastin is not licensed for use in the eye. If a drug is used off-label it may not have undergone clinical trials to establish safety and efficacy. Many common licensed drugs are used off-label but usually where there is no licensed alternative.

#### **General Side Effects**

When Avastin is given to patients with metastatic (advanced) colorectal cancer, some patients experience serious and sometimes life-threatening complications such as gastrointestinal perforations or wound healing complications, haemorrhage, arterial events (such as stroke or heart attack), hypertension, protein in the urine and congestive heart failure.

However patients who experienced these complications not only had late colon cancer but were also given 400 times the dose you will be given, at more frequent intervals and in a way (through an intravenous infusion) that spreads the drug throughout their bodies.

Surveillance data suggests that ocular use of Avastin may be associated with a very small increased risk of adverse vascular systemic events (including stroke and heart attacks) compared to patients treated with Lucentis. This risk is more significant in individuals who are already at risk of vascular events.

#### **Side Effects in the Eye**

The benefits and risks of intravitreal Avastin for eye conditions are not fully known but are probably similar to Lucentis. There are currently large clinical trials underway to compare the safety and efficacy of Lucentis and Avastin. The CATT trial comparing Lucentis and Avastin in wet macular degeneration shows broadly similar effectiveness provided injections but it is too early to report on the comparison for systemic side effects.

Trials in diabetic maculopathy suggest that both Avastin and Lucentis may confer a small additional benefit compared to laser alone.

## Choice

In many cases there will be a choice of agents, and the agents vary greatly in cost. This information sheet is designed to help you and your consultant choose the most suitable agent for you.

<b>Lucentis</b>	
About	Drug name is ranibizumab. European Licence February 2007.
Benefits	Benefits established in treatment of wet macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusions and diabetic maculopathy.
Side Effects	Uncommon but serious complications of the injection (not necessarily the drug) include severe infection (endophthalmitis). Other injection side effects include glaucoma, cataract and retinal detachment.
Clinical Trials	Landmark ANCHOR and MARINA trials are the classic trials in wet macular degeneration. Other trials give support and there is an excellent evidence base. BRAVO study in branch retinal vein occlusion CRUSE study in central retinal vein occlusion RESTORE and DRCR.net trials in diabetic maculopathy.
<b>Avastin</b>	
About	Drug name is bevacizumab. It is not licensed for use in the eye. It has been widely used for eye treatments across the world.
Benefits	Probably similar to Lucentis. Evidence of comparable effectiveness in wet macular degeneration (CATT trial). Evidence of effectiveness in diabetic maculopathy (BOLT trial).
Side Effects	Comparison on safety not fully established but small trends from multiple trials may favour Lucentis. This trend might be more significant in those already at high risk of adverse vascular events (eg. stroke / heart attack).
Clinical Trials	BOLT study in diabetic maculopathy demonstrated effectiveness. Moorfields ABC trial ongoing. CATT trial comparing Avastin and Lucentis has shown broadly similar efficacy and safety with small trend favouring Lucentis, particularly if injections are not undertaken monthly.