

CRA Position Statement on Canadian Access to Citrate-free Humira

Humira has been proven to be effective in a number of rheumatic and inflammatory diseases. Unfortunately, adherence to Humira injections is often limited by the associated pain reported by patients¹. This is particularly challenging for young children. Painful injections impact negatively on the quality of life of children and their families. Studies have shown that 40% of children resist medications that involve injections, and parental fear of pain predicts a decrease in treatment adherence².

Citrate-free Humira is available to patients in the United States, Europe and many other countries worldwide. Studies have shown that this formulation causes significantly less pain^{3,4}, thereby improving adherence and quality of life. Despite Health Canada approval, and for reasons that are not clear, citrate-free Humira is not available in Canada. Thus Canadian children are being denied access to citrate-free Humira, which is better tolerated than the current formulation, despite availability of citrate-free Humira to patients elsewhere.

The Canadian Rheumatology Association strongly recommends that access to citrate-free Humira be made available for Canadian children requiring treatment with Humira.

References:

1. Gely C, Marín L, Gordillo J, Mañosa M, Bertoletti F, Cañete F, González-Muñoz C, Calafat M, Domènech E, Garcia-Planella E. Impact of pain associated with the subcutaneous administration of adalimumab. *Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2020 Jan;43(1):9-13.
2. Yvonne N Brandelli, Christine T Chambers, Perri R Tutelman, Jennifer N Stinson, Adam M Huber, Jennifer P Wilson, Parent Pain Cognitions and Treatment Adherence in Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, Volume 44, Issue 9, October 2019, Pages 1111–1119, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/psz067>
3. Nash P, Vanhoof J, Hall S, Arulmani U, Tarzynski-Potempa R, Payne AN, Cividino A. Randomized Crossover Comparison of Injection Site Pain with 40 mg/0.4 or 0.8 mL Formulations of Adalimumab in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis. *Rheumatol Ther*. 2016 Dec; 3(2): 257–270.
4. Tomohiko Yoshida, Yasuhiro Otaki, Naooki Katsuyama, Michiko Seki & Junko Kubota (2019) New adalimumab formulation associated with less injection site pain and improved motivation for treatment, *Modern Rheumatology*, DOI: [10.1080/14397595.2018.1520426](https://doi.org/10.1080/14397595.2018.1520426)

Last updated: May 8, 2020