



13 March 2023

Cibinqo (abrocitinib), Jyseleca (filgotinib), Olumiant (baricitinib), Rinvoq (upadacitinib) and Xeljanz (tofacitinib) – Updated recommendations to minimise the risks of malignancy, major adverse cardiovascular events, serious infections, venous thromboembolism and mortality with use of Janus kinase inhibitors (JAKi).

Dear Healthcare Professional,

AbbVie, Galapagos, Lilly and Pfizer in agreement with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) would like to inform you of the following:

Summary

- **An increased incidence of malignancy, major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE), serious infections, venous thromboembolism (VTE) and mortality has been observed in patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) with certain risk factors using JAKi treatment compared to TNF α inhibitors.**
- **These risks are considered class effects and relevant across all approved indications of JAKi in inflammatory and dermatologic diseases.**
- **These JAKi should only be used if no suitable treatment alternatives are available in patients:**
 - **65 years of age and older;**
 - **who are current or past long-time smokers;**
 - **with other cardiovascular or malignancy risk factors.**
- **JAKi should be used with caution in patients with VTE risk factors other than those listed above.**
- **Dosing recommendations are revised for some patient groups with risk factors.**
- **Periodic skin examination is recommended for all patients.**
- **Prescribers should discuss with patients the risks associated with the use of JAKi.**

Background on the safety concern

The JAKi Cibinqo (abrocitinib), Jyseleca (filgotinib), Olumiant (baricitinib), Rinvoq (upadacitinib) and Xeljanz (tofacitinib) are approved for the treatment of several chronic inflammatory disorders (rheumatoid arthritis (RA), psoriatic arthritis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis, ulcerative colitis, atopic dermatitis, and alopecia areata).

The approved use differs for the different products, as outlined in the respective product information.

In March 2021, a Direct Healthcare Professional Communication (DHPC) for Xeljanz (tofacitinib)¹ was sent to healthcare professionals, informing them that data from a completed clinical trial (A3921133)² in patients with RA who were 50 years of age or older with at least one additional cardiovascular risk factor, suggest a higher risk of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE) and malignancies (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC)) with tofacitinib as compared to patients treated with a TNF-alpha inhibitor.

An additional DHPC³ was sent in July 2021 to inform about an increased incidence of myocardial infarction, lung cancer, and lymphoma with tofacitinib compared to TNF-alpha inhibitors observed in the same clinical trial, as well as adopted recommendations for the product information of tofacitinib.

Preliminary findings from an observational study (B023) involving another JAK inhibitor, Olumiant (baricitinib), also suggest an increased risk of major cardiovascular events and VTE in patients with RA treated with Olumiant compared with those treated with TNF-alpha inhibitors.

Following the finalization of the review procedure of the available data across these five JAKi by EMA, recommendations have been adopted as specified in the "summary" above. The product information and the educational materials for healthcare professional and patients is being updated accordingly.

This letter is not intended as a complete description of the benefits and risks related to the use of these products. For further details, please refer to the updated SmPC for the respective products.

Call for reporting

Please report suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) to the MHRA through the Yellow Card scheme.

You can report via:

- the Yellow Card website <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>
- the free Yellow Card app available from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store
- some clinical IT systems (EMIS/SystmOne/Vision/MiDatabank) for healthcare professionals

Alternatively, you can report a suspected side effect to the Yellow Card scheme by calling 0800 731 6789 for free, Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

When reporting please provide as much information as possible, including information about medical history, any concomitant medication, timing onset, treatment dates, and product brand name.

Adverse events can also be reported to the MAH via the contact details below

¹ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/medicines/dhpc/xeljanz-tofacitinib-initial-clinical-trial-results-increased-risk-major-adverse-cardiovascular>

² Ytterberg, Steven R., et al. "Cardiovascular and cancer risk with tofacitinib in rheumatoid arthritis." *New England Journal of Medicine* 386.4 (2022): 316-326.

³ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/medicines/dhpc/xeljanz-tofacitinib-increased-risk-major-adverse-cardiovascular-events-malignancies-use-tofacitinib>

Company contact point

Please find the relevant contact for each product in the table below.

Product	Cibinqo (abrocitinib)	Jyseleca (filgotinib)	Olumiant (baricitinib)	Rinvoq (upadacitinib)	Xeljanz (tofacitinib)
MAH	Pfizer	Galapagos	Lilly	AbbVie	Pfizer
Website address	www.pfizermedicalinformation.co.uk	www.glpq.com	UKMedInfo@Lilly.com	https://www.abbvie.co.uk/	www.pfizermedicalinformation.co.uk
Telephone number	01304 616161	00800 7878 1345	01256 315000	44 (0)1628 561092	01304 616161
Email address	medical.information@pfizer.com	DrugSafety.UK.Ireland@glpg.com	UKMedInfo@Lilly.com	ukmedinfo@abbvie.com	medical.information@pfizer.com
Postal address	Pfizer Limited Ramsgate Road Sandwich, Kent CT13 9NJ United Kingdom	Galapagos Biotech Ltd, Orega Uxbridge, Belmont, Belmont Road, Uxbridge UB8 1HE	Eli Lilly & Company Limited, Lilly House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4FA UNITED KINGDOM	AbbVie Ltd AbbVie House Vanwall Business Park Vanwall Road Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 4UB	Pfizer Limited Ramsgate Road Sandwich, Kent CT13 9NJ United Kingdom

Sincerely,

Dr Berkeley Phillips, UK Medical Vice President, Pfizer Ltd.	Mohammad Al-Addai Senior Medical Director UK & Ireland Galapagos Biotech Ltd, UK	Eddie Guzdar Senior Medical Director, Immunology Northern European Hub Eli Lilly & Company Limited, UK	Belinda Byrne Medical Director AbbVie Ltd UK
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