

GUIDE

# NSW Lutate therapy referral and protocol

## for neuroendocrine cancer patients

Nuclear Medicine Network and Cancer Institute NSW



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## Glossary

LHD	local health district
MDT	multidisciplinary team
NETs	neuroendocrine tumours
PRRT	peptide receptor radionuclide therapy
SSA	somatostatin analogue

## Contents

<b>Referral to NSW Lutate services</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Patient assessment process</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Suitability criteria for Lutate therapy .....	2
Exclusion criteria.....	2
<b>Lutate Treatment</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Lutate reconstitution.....	3
Prior to the day of Lutate therapy .....	3
On the day of Lutate therapy.....	4
Possible side effects .....	4
Post-Lutate treatments.....	5

## Background

Patients are diagnosed with neuroendocrine tumours (NETs) using multiple imaging modalities, blood tests, biopsies, surgery, or any combination of these methods. Final confirmation is made histologically.

Once NETs are diagnosed there is a range of initial treatment options which may be considered by the patient and their oncologist in their home local health district (LHD).

Peptide Receptor Radionuclide Therapy (PRRT) or Lutetium177-Dota-Octreotate (Lutate) therapy in NSW is used when there is progression of NETs disease and existing growth-inhibiting therapies are no longer effective.

Lutate therapy is a specific therapy suitable for some but not all NETs patients, delivered by Nuclear Medicine departments. In the majority of cases, Lutate stabilises or improves disease that has previously been progressive, and some patients achieve remission.

## Referral to NSW Lutate services

NSW is supporting an evaluation of Lutate therapy at two sites; St George and Royal North Shore Hospitals.

Several hospitals in NSW have a NETs multidisciplinary team (MDT) or a broader cancer MDT. Once the MDT establishes that Lutate may be a valid treatment option, it is a requirement that their patients are referred to and reviewed by the NETs MDT at one of the two NSW Lutate services.

### Lutate services

#### St George Hospital

Lutate bookings clerk: 9113 3123

#### Royal North Shore Hospital

Lutate bookings clerk: 9926 4440

When patients are referred to one of the two NSW Lutate services, they will be added to a NETs MDT register. A range of factors will inform the assignment of patients for assessment, including the capacity of each centre, continuity of care and convenience for patients. Patients will need to meet agreed patient suitability criteria before Lutate treatment can be considered.

Multi-modality treatments may still be required during Lutate therapy. Any additional treatments during Lutate therapy should be discussed with the patient and their referring oncologist to determine whether there are other options closer to home, etc. It is expected that patients will return to the care of their referring oncologist post-Lutate therapy.

If Lutate therapy is not recommended at this time by the Lutate service's NETs MDT, the patient should be referred back to their oncologist with discussion around reasons for exclusion.

To be considered by the NETS MDT at St George or Royal North Shore hospitals, the following results should accompany the patient to be assessed for Lutate suitability:

- Confirmation of diagnosis of NETs – biopsy results.
- <sup>68</sup>Ga octreotate scan (<sup>111</sup>In octreotide scan is an acceptable substitute if PET is not available).
- CT scan (chest/abdo/pelvis).
- Blood workup (including full blood count (FBC), biochemistry, chromogranin level, hormone assays of blood and urine).

## Patient assessment process for commencement of therapy

All patients being considered for Lutate therapy will:

- meet all of the suitability criteria listed below
- have no contraindications/exclusion criteria
- be recommended for Lutate therapy by the NETs MDT.

### Suitability criteria for Lutate therapy

- Histologically proven NET of any origin.
- Locally advanced and/or inoperable (metastatic) disease.
- Failed first line systemic therapy.
- Progressive disease demonstrated radiologically while on somatostatin analogue therapy or uncontrolled symptoms despite systemic therapy.
- Presence of somatostatin-receptors on the known tumour lesions demonstrated by <sup>68</sup>Ga octreotate scan within past 6 months. The uptake of the NET lesions should be at least as high as normal liver uptake.
- Eastern Cooperative Oncology Group (ECOG) status 0-2.
- Patient's written voluntary informed consent.

### Exclusion criteria

- Significant co-morbidity that is likely to interfere with the therapy.
- ECOG 3 or 4.
- Uncontrolled congestive heart failure or carcinoid heart disease.
- Patients unable to interrupt somatostatin analogue (SSA) therapy for the following periods:
  - short-acting SSA: 12 hours before, and 12 hours after, Lutate
  - long-acting SSA: 4-6 weeks before Lutate
  - *(unless the tumour uptake is  $\geq$  normal liver uptake on the <sup>68</sup>Ga octreotate scan during continued SSA treatment).*
- Life expectancy less than 12 weeks.
- Pregnancy.
- Renal impairment (GFR < 40 ml/min/1.73m<sup>2</sup>).
- Impaired bone marrow reserve:
  - haemoglobin  $\leq$  9.0 g/dL
  - WBC  $\leq$  2 x 10<sup>9</sup>/L
  - absolute neutrophil count < 1.0
  - platelet count  $\leq$  75 x 10<sup>9</sup>/L.

- Hepatic impairment
  - total serum bilirubin  $\geq$  75 micromoles/L or  $\geq$  1.5 x upper limit normal (unless Gilbert's syndrome)
  - serum albumin  $\leq$  25 gm/L.
- Discordant FDG uptake (with significant disease that is FDG avid but  $^{68}\text{Ga}$  dotatate non-avid). In these patients, other systemic therapies are recommended.

## Lutate Treatment

### Lutate reconstitution

Lutetium-177 and peptide will be procured from recognised commercial radiopharmaceutical suppliers (e.g. IDB Holland, ITG Germany, and/or ANSTO) and delivered to St George and Royal North Shore hospitals. Reconstitution of the Lu177-DOTA-octreotate is performed in the Nuclear Medicine department following the recommendations of the manufacturer/supplier. Quality Control should be performed prior to administration and should meet minimum acceptable standards (e.g. radiochemical purity  $>95\%$ , clear and colourless appearance, pH 4-8, filter integrity confirmed) as specified by the manufacturer.

The therapy is administered over four cycles, 8 weeks (range 6-12 weeks) apart. The total treatment regimen takes approximately 32 weeks.

### Prior to the day of Lutate therapy

- Once recommended for consideration of Lutate therapy by a NET MDT, the patient will attend the Nuclear Medicine department of the treating facility for a consultation with Nuclear Medicine staff.
- **Investigations** Relevant investigations will be reviewed, or undertaken as appropriate, including blood tests (FBC, EUC, LFT), GFR assessment for kidney function and cardiac imaging (if required). If not already performed, a fluorodeoxyglucose positron emission tomography (FDG PET) scan may also be required in patients with higher grades of disease to determine if there is any FDG-avid /  $^{68}\text{Ga}$  dotatate non-avid disease.
- **Radiosensitising chemotherapy or adjuvant chemotherapy** may be administered before, and after, each cycle of Lutate in all patients undergoing Lutate therapy, unless absolutely (or relatively) contraindicated in individual clinical situations.
- **Somatostatin analogue treatment** can be continued in between treatments with radiolabelled somatostatin analogues. However, long-acting somatostatin analogues, such as Sandostatin LAR, should be discontinued at least 4-6 weeks before the treatment date and short-acting somatostatin analogues should be stopped the day before the treatment date, unless not clinically possible, and the uptake on the  $^{68}\text{Ga}$  Octreotate scan during continued somatostatin analogue medication is sufficient (lesions  $\geq$  normal liver). Treatment with short-acting somatostatin analogues can be resumed the day after the administration of Lutate.
- As Lutate is not registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), a Special Access Scheme (SAS) form signed by the Nuclear Medicine Physician should be completed and forwarded to the TGA and the commercial supplier.

## On the day of Lutate therapy

The patient should not fast (a light breakfast is preferable) and should be well hydrated. Medication can be continued, except for somatostatin analogues (see above).

The patient will present to the Nuclear Medicine department and undergo the following.

- **Clinical review** (as relevant).
- **βHCG** test (if appropriate).
- **Cannulation** (taking care to ensure there is no risk of extravasation).
- **Premedication administration** To reduce the likelihood and severity of nausea and vomiting (secondary to the amino acid infusion), premedications are administered. These will vary according to local preference and availability but will typically comprise Dexamethasone (PO or IV) and a selective 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonist (usually Granisetron, Ondansetron, or Tropisetron). If clinically indicated, Temazepam or Lorazepam may be administered for 2 days after treatment. In patients with (or at risk of) hyperkalaemia, PO resonium A (30mg) may be prescribed.
- **Transmission scan** This is performed using a Co-57 sheet source and may be performed prior to each Lutate therapy, or prior only to the first patient's first therapy, according to local protocol. Acquisition is performed using Triple Energy Window for scatter subtraction.
- **Amino acid infusion** This is administered for renoprotection and is administered over 3-4 hours at 250ml/hr. Slower infusions (4-5hrs) should be done in patients with renal impairment. There is the option to use either an amino acid solution containing 25gm of lysine per litre and 25gm of arginine per litre (made in-house), or Baxter Synthamin containing 5.8 g Lysine and 11.5 g Arginine per litre.
- **Lutate** At approximately 30 minutes after commencement of the amino acid infusion, 7.5-8GBq Lu-177-DOTA Octreotate (Lutate) is administered. Lutate is infused over 20-30 minutes under the supervision of the Nuclear Medicine Physician. At the completion of the Lutate infusion, the amino acid infusion continues for a further 2-4 hours (as detailed above).
- **Scintigraphy** Gamma camera imaging is performed to permit renal dosimetry calculations. In general, a whole body image with 2 windows (DEW – dual energy window subtraction) will be done at 4 - 6 hours post administration. In addition, a SPECT/CT image with 2 windows (DEW) at 4 – 6 hours is also performed after each cycle. Additional imaging may be performed according to local preference. Renal dosimetry is calculated and recorded for each patient after each cycle of Lutate.

## Possible side effects

- **Nausea and vomiting** In the event of nausea or vomiting despite the premedication, patients will be treated with other anti-emetic drugs at the discretion of the physician, such as oral metachlopramide.
- **Carcinoid Crisis** Patients who have been treated with somatostatin analogues previously are able to be treated with Octreotide acetate in the event of carcinoid crisis. Octreotide doses of 50-500 mcg, repeated as necessary administered by rapid IV injection for control

of hypotension and other manifestations of carcinoid crisis. Prolonged IV infusions at 50 mcg/hour infused for 8-24 hours can be used, depending on the clinical condition of the patient.

### Post-Lutate treatments

- In between therapy cycles, the patient is reviewed by their treating medical oncologist who is responsible for their management and decisions regarding cessation of lutate treatment. Treatment may be delayed or ceased based on clinical and patient considerations.
- **Blood tests** All patients will have haematology (FBC) and blood chemistry (EUC, LFT) evaluations 4 weeks after each treatment. Further blood samples must be collected within 2 weeks prior to the next Lutate administration. Serial Chromogranin A measurements will be done according to local protocols and referrer preference, as appropriate.
- **Imaging** Following the fourth course of Lu-177 Octeotate therapy, a repeat <sup>68</sup>Ga dotatate scan will be obtained to assess treatment response. Additional <sup>68</sup>Ga dotatate scans may be done as clinically required or according to local preference. Restaging CT scans will be done at the discretion of the treating medical oncologist as per the standard care of patients with NET, typically 2-4 months after treatment. If FDG avidity was demonstrated at baseline, serial FDG studies may be warranted.
- **Medications and chemotherapy** Somatostatin analogues and radiosensitising chemotherapy will be prescribed as detailed above.
- **Safety reporting** Safety assessments will consist of monitoring and recording all adverse events and serious adverse events, the regular monitoring of haematology and blood chemistry values, and the performance of physical examinations by the referring oncologist between cycles of Lutate therapy. Any adverse event thought related to Lutate will be recorded with the information forwarded to company supplying the Lu177-DOTA-Octreotate therapy in accordance with the TGA Special Access Scheme (SAS) requirements.
- **Data collection** A database is maintained at each site which comprises a minimum agreed data set relevant to Lutate therapy. Information collected will be available for collation into the database to be developed the NSW Cancer Institute.