

# Service Information Leaflet



Intramuscular  
Vitamin B12

*Please read this leaflet prior to purchasing a voucher*

**Hydroxocobalamin - a UK licensed Prescription Only Medicine (POM), used by VitaJab to protect and maintain the health of individuals successfully completing our medical screen**

Hydroxocobalamin is a form of vitamin B12 used to treat Vitamin B12 deficiency. At VitaJab we use the medicine 'off-license' to treat the potential symptoms of sub-optimal vitamin B12 levels and to protect the health of those following a Plant Based Diet absent in the vitamin.

Even if a person is not deficient in Vitamin B12, as defined by a blood test, the symptoms of a B12 deficiency including fatigue, lethargy and reduced mental function may be experienced. This is a private service outside the scope of NHS guidelines.

This service does not aim to diagnose and/or treat vitamin B12 deficiency. You should consult your GP for a formal diagnosis, which may require a different treatment plan as per NHS guidelines. Receiving B12 injections may delay a formal diagnosis of deficiency.

## Other causes of symptoms

Although sub-optimal levels of B12 may cause or contribute to feelings of lethargy, malaise and mental fog, it is important to be aware of other causes. These include iron & folate deficiency, vitamin D deficiency and metabolic causes such as thyroid dysfunction. We therefore recommend that you speak with your GP, or a private clinic, if you wish to be tested for these prior to using the service.

*Administered with care by experienced pharmacists and pharmacy technicians*

## Intramuscular Administration

Using a sterile needle the medicine is injected directly into muscle tissue underneath the skin and fatty tissue layer. The muscle targeted is the deltoid muscle in the upper arm beneath the shoulder. The injection takes around 5-10 seconds to complete.

## Side effects

Hydroxocobalamin has been used for decades and it has a long and proven safety record with very few reports of side effects affecting patients. Please review the Patient Information Leaflet for more detailed information from the manufacturer. The medicine is virtually non-toxic and has very few drug interactions.

Following any kind of intramuscular injection it is possible for soreness, numbness, redness, itching or bruising to develop at the injection site. This is often mild and short-lived, lasting for no longer than 24hrs.

VitaJab carefully and thoroughly identifies people who may not be suitable to receive a vitamin B12 (Hydroxocobalamin) injection to ensure their safety. Completing our medical screen honestly and accurately allows us to do this. A member of our prescribing team will review your information once you have completed the medical screen and, if appropriate, they may authorise a private prescription.

## Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is always the greatest risk when administering any medicine by the intramuscular route. It is a life-threatening medical emergency that is extremely rare and is the reason why a small period of observation, around 5-10 minutes, is necessary after administration.

Despite this, any healthcare professional authorised to administer medicines intramuscularly must undertake regular training to recognise the symptoms of anaphylaxis and to provide emergency care to anyone affected.

## Vegan Suitability

To our knowledge, most of the ampoules within the UK supply chain are suitable for use by Vegans. Nevertheless, we encourage anyone that is vegan to contact their nearest participating pharmacy to clarify this on the basis of the particular stock currently being used there.

## GP Notification

It is standard practice for the pharmacist administering your B12 injection to notify your GP using a standardised letter. Our GPs are the centre point of our healthcare and it's important that our medical records are kept accurate and up to date for future reference.

*Be sure to speak with your pharmacist if you have any questions before purchasing a voucher*