Bezlotoxumab Approved to Prevent Clostridium difficile Recurrence

Recurrence is a major concern when it comes to clostridium difficile (C. diff.) recurrence. Patients often receive long courses of antibiotics, not always with success for the long-term. Merck has developed a monoclonal antibody which neutralizes one of the toxins associated with the pathogenesis of C. diff. infections. The antibody is named Bezlotuxumab and will be marketed as Zinplava starting in 2017. This treatment however cannot be used alone. The prescribing information requires that bezlotuxumab always needs to be used with an antimicrobial used to treat the c. diff. organism itself. Zinplava is recommended to be dosed at 10 mg/kg, and is to be infused over 60 minutes. It will be supplied in 1000mg vials which must be diluted to a concentration between 1-10 mg/ml with either normal saline or 5% dextrose. In terms of stability the product, once diluted, should be used within 16 hours if left at room temperature and 24 hours if refrigerated. One caveat to this time frame is that the time for infusion counts towards the total time of stability. Always ensure that the infusion is at room temperature before infusing into the patient. A sterile, nonpyrogenic, low-protein-binding 0.2-5 microns inline or add-on filter needs to be used with this infusion. Zinplava should not be given IV push or bolus, but either a central or peripheral line is acceptable. Nausea, fever, and headache were the most common side effects. Zinplava comes with the caution that it may place patients with a history of congestive heart failure at an increased risk of heart failure. No other medications should be administered through the line with Zinplava.

References:

American Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists. Bezlotoxumab Approved to Prevent Clostridium difficile Recurrence. Available at: http://www.ashp.org/menu/News/PharmacyNews/NewsArticle.aspx?id=4375. Accessed on December 2, 2016.