



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Ixchiq (*chikungunya vaccine, live, attenuated*)

An overview of Ixchiq and why it is authorised in the EU

What is Ixchiq and what is it used for?

Ixchiq is a vaccine used to help protect people aged 12 years and older against disease caused by the chikungunya virus. Chikungunya is a viral disease that mosquitoes can pass to humans.

Ixchiq contains a strain of chikungunya virus that has been attenuated (weakened).

How is Ixchiq used?

The medicine can only be obtained with a prescription and should be used according to official recommendations issued at national level by public health bodies.

The recommended dose is one injection into the muscle of the upper arm.

Vaccinated people should continue to apply personal protection measures against mosquito bites after vaccination. These include use of mosquito repellents and nets, wearing clothing that covers most of the body and sleeping in screened or air-conditioned rooms.

For more information about using Ixchiq, see the package leaflet or contact your doctor or pharmacist.

How does Ixchiq work?

Ixchiq is a vaccine. Vaccines work by preparing the immune system (the body's natural defences) to defend the body against a specific disease. Ixchiq contains a strain of chikungunya virus that has been attenuated (weakened). When a person is given Ixchiq, the immune system recognises the weakened virus as 'foreign' and makes antibodies against it. If the person later comes into contact with the chikungunya virus, the immune system will be able to fight off the virus more effectively and so help to protect the person against chikungunya.

What benefits of Ixchiq have been shown in studies?

Adults

Ixchiq was shown to be effective at triggering the production of antibodies against the chikungunya virus in two main studies involving around 4,500 adults. This is expected to reduce the risk of getting disease caused by the chikungunya virus.

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In one main study, over 4,000 people were given Ixchiq or placebo (a dummy treatment). The study looked at whether Ixchiq could trigger a level of antibodies expected to provide protection in about 400 people. The target level of antibodies expected to provide protection was based on data from animal studies and information from people who were previously exposed to chikungunya virus and who had developed immunity. One month after the injection, nearly 99% of people given Ixchiq had reached the target level of antibodies, compared with none of those given placebo. Follow-up data showed that two years after vaccination, this target level was maintained in 97% of people who received Ixchiq.

Another main study involving around 360 people who all received Ixchiq showed similar results, with 98% of people reaching the target level of antibodies one month after injection.

Adolescents

In a main study involving adolescents aged 12 to 17 years of age, around 99 % (248 out of 251) of those who were not previously infected with the chikungunya virus and were given Ixchiq reached the target level of antibodies 28 days after vaccination compared with around 2% (1 out of 41) of those given placebo. Six months after vaccination, this target level was maintained in 99% of those given Ixchiq compared with 0% given placebo.

What are the risks associated with Ixchiq?

For the full list of side effects and restrictions with Ixchiq, see the package leaflet.

The most common side effects with Ixchiq in adults and adolescents (which may affect more than 1 in 10 people) include leucopenia, neutropenia and lymphopenia (low levels of white blood cells, including neutrophils and lymphocytes, as seen in blood tests), headache, tiredness, myalgia (muscle pain), joint pain (arthralgia), elevated liver enzymes as seen in blood tests, fever, nausea (feeling sick), and tenderness and pain at the site of injection.

Some side effects can be serious and include encephalopathy (general dysfunction of the brain, which may be caused by various factors), encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), and aseptic (not caused by bacteria) meningitis (inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord), as well as overall health worsening, and long-term health problems becoming more severe. These side effects have been reported particularly in males aged 65 years and older with chronic (long-term) diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes or chronic kidney disease. Their frequency cannot be estimated from available data.

Ixchiq must not be given to people who are immunodeficient or immunosuppressed (have a weakened immune system) due to a disease or treatment. This includes people with cancer, those receiving chemotherapy, those who have an inherited immune deficiency, those taking immunosuppressive treatment (treatment which reduces the activity of the immune system) or people with HIV who have a severely weakened immune system.

Why is Ixchiq authorised in the EU?

At the time of approval, there was no vaccine available to protect against chikungunya. Therefore, Ixchiq was addressing an unmet medical need. Ixchiq triggers an immune response against chikungunya virus in adults that is maintained for at least 2 years after vaccination. Similarly, the vaccine triggers a robust immune response in adolescents that is maintained for at least 6 months after vaccination.

There are some uncertainties regarding the effectiveness of the vaccine due to the lack of data on how well Ixchiq protects against chikungunya. However, the immune response triggered by Ixchiq indicates

that the vaccine is expected to provide some protection against disease caused by the chikungunya virus.

The company marketing IxchIQ will conduct studies in areas where the chikungunya virus circulates to evaluate how well IxchIQ protects vaccinated people against the disease. In terms of safety, the vaccine has side effects similar to those seen with other vaccines containing live, attenuated viruses. The safety profile of the vaccine in adolescents is similar to that seen in adults.

The European Medicines Agency therefore decided that IxchIQ's benefits are greater than its risks and it can be authorised for use in the EU.

What measures are being taken to ensure the safe and effective use of IxchIQ?

The company marketing IxchIQ must carry out a study to assess the effectiveness of IxchIQ in adults and adolescents living in areas where the chikungunya virus is spreading.

Recommendations and precautions to be followed by healthcare professionals and patients for the safe and effective use of IxchIQ have been included in the summary of product characteristics and the package leaflet.

As for all medicines, data on the use of IxchIQ are continuously monitored. Suspected side effects reported with IxchIQ are carefully evaluated and any necessary action taken to protect patients.

Other information about IxchIQ

IxchIQ received a marketing authorisation valid throughout the EU on 28 June 2024.

Further information on IxchIQ can be found on the Agency's website:
ema.europa.eu/medicines/human/EPAR/ixchIQ.

This overview was last updated in 09-2025.