Triage policy for patients with previous vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT)

VITT is a rare disorder occurring after COVID-19 vaccination and leading to blood clots in multiple organ sites including the venous sinuses of the brain. Untreated the risk of death is over 50%. People who have previously had VITT may present with recurrent symptoms. They need to be monitored closely. Signs of relapse may be when a patient’s platelet count starts to fall, or they develop new or recurrent symptoms.

These include
- Headaches which may be worse on lying down or bending forward, or associated with nausea or vomiting.
- Changes in vision, fits or weakness on one side of the body or face.
- Persistent abdominal (tummy) pain
- blood in the stools
- Chest pain, shortness of breath
- Leg swelling

Patients with previous VITT, who call up with new symptoms that they think may be their VITT returning, should have a full blood count, D Dimer and clotting screen including Clauss fibrinogen.

If the patient lives in the Oxford area, this should be through haematology triage or in A&E. If the patient lives near another hospital in the Thames Valley, the blood samples may either be taken in Oxford, or the patient will be diverted towards their local A&E.

If the full blood count shows a normal platelet count, the patient may be discharged and the asked to report the following day if symptoms persist or become worse.


A flow chart for calls from patients with previous VITT is on page 2 of this document.
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Flow chart for triage calls for a patient with previous VITT

1. Patient known to have recent Vaccine induced thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT)
   - Call with concerns about relapse*
     - FBC, D-dimers and Clauss fibrinogen
     - Contact on call haematology registrar
     - Platelet count less than 150 x10^9/L. Urgent assessment by haematology registrar
   - Platelet count 150 x10^9/L or more – patient can go home with follow-up in haematology clinic.
2. Call with other queries
   - Email queries to consultant leading on VITT

*symptoms of VITT include headache, confusion, blurred vision, weakness on one side, severe abdominal or chest pain, stomach upset and bloody diarrhoea, anything unusual and severe.