

Plain English Summary

Daratumumab treatment regimens for newly diagnosed multiple myeloma

What does the guidance say?

Treatment regimens containing daratumumab are not recommended for government subsidy for patients with newly diagnosed multiple myeloma.

What is multiple myeloma?

Multiple myeloma is a type of blood cancer that causes plasma cells to grow uncontrollably and produce abnormal “myeloma cells” in bone marrow (the spongy tissue at the centre of some bones that produces the body’s blood cells). As the number of myeloma cells increases in bone marrow, there is less room for healthy blood cells, causing bone pain and making patients more susceptible to infections. Approximately 100 people are diagnosed with multiple myeloma each year in Singapore.

Many patients with multiple myeloma do not have any symptoms initially and will not require treatment. Patients who have symptoms will usually receive a combination of different medicines which each work differently to kill myeloma cells and treat as much of the cancer as possible to achieve remission.

What is daratumumab?

Daratumumab belongs to a group of medicines called monoclonal antibodies. It attaches to a protein called CD38 on the surface of myeloma cells and helps the body’s immune system identify and destroy them. It is given as an injection or a slow drip into a vein (intravenously) in combination with other medicines. The most common daratumumab treatment regimens for newly diagnosed multiple myeloma include:

- Daratumumab with bortezomib, thalidomide and dexamethasone, and
- Daratumumab with lenalidomide and dexamethasone.

Your doctor will tell you which treatment regimen is most suitable for you, how much you need to have and how long you need to have it for.

Why were these regimens not recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Daratumumab regimens were not recommended for subsidy because their benefits for patients with newly diagnosed multiple myeloma are uncertain compared to other treatments that are available, and do not justify their costs. If you need any daratumumab regimens for multiple myeloma, you can speak to a medical social worker to find out if there is other financial assistance available to help with the cost of treatment.

Plain English Summary

Daratumumab treatment regimens for newly diagnosed multiple myeloma

Is this the right treatment for me?

There are different types of treatments available for newly diagnosed multiple myeloma. Your doctor may recommend you have a daratumumab treatment regimen if other drugs are unsuitable. Your doctor should give you clear information, listen to your views and concerns, and talk to you about your treatment options.

Some of the questions you may want to ask your doctor when making decisions about your care are:

- How will the treatment affect my day-to-day activities?
- How well does it work compared to other treatments?
- What are the side effects and risks of treatment, and how likely are they?
- How much does the treatment cost?
- How long will I need to be on the treatment for?
- What happens if the treatment stops working?
- What happens if I do not want to have treatment?

Published: 12 July 2022

 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

The Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE) was established by the Ministry of Health (Singapore) to drive better decision-making in healthcare through health technology assessment (HTA), clinical guidance and education. It publishes guidances on diagnosing, treating, and preventing different medical conditions based on the latest research information available worldwide.

This summary is not, and should not be regarded as, a substitute for professional or medical advice. Please seek the advice of a qualified healthcare professional about any medical condition.

© Agency for Care Effectiveness, Ministry of Health, Republic of Singapore
All rights reserved. Reproduction of this publication in whole or part in any material form is prohibited without the prior written permission of the copyright holder.

To find out more about ACE visit www.ace-hta.gov.sg