

## **Febuxostat for treating chronic hyperuricaemia in adults with gout**

### WHAT DOES THE GUIDANCE SAY?

Febuxostat is not recommended for listing on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) for government subsidy.

### WHY WAS FEBUXOSTAT NOT RECOMMENDED FOR SUBSIDY?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Febuxostat was not recommended for government subsidy because its benefits for patients do not justify its cost compared to other treatments that are already subsidised.

### IS THIS TREATMENT RIGHT FOR ME?

There are different types of treatments available for chronic hyperuricaemia associated with gout. Your doctor may recommend you take febuxostat instead of other subsidised, more affordable drugs, because they may be unsuitable for you.

Your doctor should give you clear information, listen to your views and concerns, and talk to you about your treatment options. Your family can also be involved in the discussion if you wish.

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 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?

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### WHAT IS HYPERURICAEMIA?

People with hyperuricaemia have too much uric acid (also called urate) in their blood. Uric acid is produced when the body breaks down substances known as 'purines' (which are found naturally in the body and also in some foods and certain alcoholic drinks). If the body produces too much uric acid, it can build up and tiny crystals form.

### WHAT IS GOUT?

Gout, also known as gouty arthritis, occurs when uric acid crystals accumulate in the joints, causing pain, swelling and inflammation. Gout usually affects the joints of the foot (especially the big toe) but can develop in other joints such as in the knee, hand and wrist. Crystals may also occur in the kidneys causing kidney damage.

### WHAT IS FEBUXOSTAT?

You may know febuxostat as Feburic<sup>®</sup>, a drug that belongs to a group of medicines called xanthine oxidase inhibitors. It lowers the concentration of uric acid in the blood.

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ACE is the national health technology assessment agency under the Ministry of Health, Singapore. It publishes guidances on diagnosing, treating, and preventing different medical conditions based on the latest research information available worldwide.

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