

## **Ferric carboxymaltose for treating iron deficiency anaemia**

### WHAT DOES THE GUIDANCE SAY?

Ferric carboxymaltose is recommended for listing on the Standard Drug List (SDL) for government subsidy for treating iron deficiency anaemia when oral iron preparations are ineffective or cannot be used.

### WHAT IS IRON DEFICIENCY ANAEMIA?

Iron deficiency anaemia is a condition where a lack of iron in the body reduces the number of red blood cells or the amount of haemoglobin in the blood. There are many causes of iron deficiency anaemia including internal bleeding, heavy menstrual periods and conditions that block iron absorption in the intestines.

Patients with iron deficiency anaemia may feel tired and weak, have trouble breathing and have a pale complexion.

### WHAT IS FERRIC CARBOXYMALTOSE?

You may know ferric carboxymaltose as Ferinject<sup>®</sup>, a medicine used to treat anaemia. It is administered by injection or infusion and is used to treat iron deficiency anaemia when oral iron preparations are not effective or cannot be used. The aim of treatment is to replenish body iron stores and to correct the anaemia.

### HOW MUCH FERRIC CARBOXYMALTOSE CAN I TAKE?

The amount of ferric carboxymaltose you need will depend on your haemoglobin levels, weight and underlying condition. Your doctor will determine the appropriate dose for you.

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### HOW LONG SHOULD I TAKE IT?

Some people only need one dose of ferric carboxymaltose while others may require repeated treatment. Your doctor will determine the appropriate frequency and duration of your treatment.

### WHO CAN HAVE FERRIC CARBOXYMALTOSE?

People can have ferric carboxymaltose if:

- their iron level is lower than normal, confirmed by laboratory tests; and
- oral iron preparations are ineffective or cannot be used.

Your doctor will advise if ferric carboxymaltose is suitable for you.

### WHY WAS IT RECOMMENDED FOR SUBSIDY?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Ferric carboxymaltose was recommended because it is more convenient and is less costly for most patients compared to other intravenous iron preparations currently available.

### WHAT DOES LISTING ON THE SDL MEAN FOR ME?

Drugs on the Standard Drug List (SDL) represent therapies essential for managing common diseases affecting the majority of patients in Singapore.

They are subsidised at 50% for all Singaporean citizens who are treated in a public healthcare institution. Patients from lower to middle income households may receive a higher subsidy of up to 75%.

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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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