

Plain English Summary

Anabolic drugs for treating osteoporosis

What does the guidance say?

Romosozumab and teriparatide are not recommended for government subsidy for treating osteoporosis.

What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis occurs when your bones lose minerals faster than your body replaces them, making them weak and fragile, and increasing the likelihood of fractures (broken bones). The most common fractures due to osteoporosis occur in the hips, spine, and wrists, and can cause long-term pain, disability, and loss of independence. Fractures in the spine can also lead to changes in your posture and loss of height.

Osteoporosis can affect anyone but most commonly affects women after menopause and older people. Most people do not know they have osteoporosis until they have a fracture because they usually do not have any symptoms.

People with osteoporosis can make lifestyle changes and take treatments to prevent further bone loss and reduce the risk of bone fractures.

What is romosozumab?

Romosozumab belongs to a group of medicines called recombinant monoclonal antibodies. It increases bone growth and slows bone breakdown. It is given as an injection under the skin.

What is teriparatide ?

Teriparatide belongs to a group of medicines called parathyroid hormone (PTH) analogues. It is a synthetic (man-made) form of natural human PTH which is important for maintaining healthy bones and helps increase bone growth. It is given as an injection under the skin.

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Why were they not recommended for funding?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Romosozumab and teriparatide were not recommended for government subsidy because their benefits for patients with osteoporosis are uncertain and do not justify their costs compared to other treatments that are available. If you need romosozumab or teriparatide for osteoporosis, 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.

Is this the right treatment for me?

There are different types of treatments available for osteoporosis. Your doctor may recommend you have romosozumab or teriparatide if other drugs cannot adequately control your condition. 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?

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