

## Plain English Summary

# Dexamethasone implant for treating diabetic macular oedema, retinal vein occlusion, and non-infectious uveitis

## What does the guidance say?

Dexamethasone implant is not recommended for government subsidy for patients with diabetic macular oedema, non-infectious uveitis, or macular oedema following retinal vein occlusion.

## Why was it not recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Dexamethasone implant was not recommended for subsidy because its benefits for patients with diabetic macular oedema, non-infectious uveitis, or macular oedema following retinal vein occlusion do not justify its cost. If you need dexamethasone implant for your condition, 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.

## What are diabetic macular oedema, retinal vein occlusion and non-infectious uveitis?

Diabetic macular oedema is an eye condition that affects people with diabetes. Uncontrolled high blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels in the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye known as the retina. This allows fluid and blood to leak into the central part of the retina (the macula), causing it to swell (oedema). One or both eyes can be affected. Symptoms include blurry or distorted vision, dull colours, and floaters.

Retinal vein occlusion happens when a blood clot or blockage (occlusion) forms causing reduced blood flow and damage to the retina. Blood and fluid can leak into the macula, causing macular oedema. It mostly occurs in people aged 60 years or older, and usually only one eye is affected. The symptoms are similar to diabetic macular oedema.

Non-infectious uveitis is inflammation at the back of the eye that is not caused by infections. It can be caused by an eye injury or autoimmune diseases where the body's immune system attacks healthy cells by mistake. One or both eyes may be affected. Symptoms include eye pain or redness, blurry vision, floaters, and sensitivity to light.

## What is dexamethasone?

Dexamethasone belongs to a group of medicines called corticosteroids which help to reduce swelling and inflammation in the eye. It is contained within an implant device that is injected directly into the eye. Once injected, the implant slowly dissolves and releases dexamethasone over time.

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## Is this the right treatment for me?

There are different types of treatments available for these eye conditions. Your doctor may recommend you have dexamethasone implant if other drugs are not effective. 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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 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE  Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

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