

Plain English Summary

Long-acting erythropoiesis-stimulating agents for treating anaemia in chronic kidney disease

What does the guidance say?

Darbepoetin alfa and methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta are recommended for listing on the Standard Drug List (SDL) for government subsidy to treat anaemia in patients with chronic kidney disease.

What is anaemia?

Anaemia occurs when the body does not produce enough red blood cells. The kidneys make an important hormone called erythropoietin, which causes the bone marrow to make red blood cells.

It is common for patients with chronic kidney disease to develop anaemia because their kidneys are not working properly and cannot produce enough erythropoietin to maintain a healthy amount of red blood cells. Symptoms of anaemia can include tiredness, headaches and chest pain.

What are darbepoetin alfa and methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta?

Darbepoetin alfa and methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta belong to a group of medicines called long-acting erythropoiesis-stimulating agents which cause the bone marrow to produce red blood cells.

Both treatments are given as an injection under your skin or into a vein.

How much do I need to take?

Your doctor will usually prescribe one injection every one to two weeks and adjust the dose according to your body weight and severity of anaemia.

Your doctor will regularly assess if darbepoetin alfa or methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta is working for you and if you are likely to benefit from continued treatment.

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Who can have these treatments?

Patients with anaemia associated with chronic kidney disease can have darbepoetin alfa or methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta.

Your doctor can advise if either of these treatments are suitable for you.

Why were these treatments recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Darbepoetin alfa and methoxy polyethylene glycol-epoetin beta were recommended because their benefits in treating anaemia in certain patients with chronic kidney disease justify their costs.

What does listing on SDL mean for me?

Drugs on SDL 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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 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

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