

Plain English Summary

Sodium zirconium cyclosilicate for treating hyperkalaemia

What does the guidance say?

Sodium zirconium cyclosilicate is not recommended for government funding for patients with hyperkalaemia.

Why was it not recommended for funding?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Sodium zirconium cyclosilicate was not recommended for funding because its benefits for patients with hyperkalaemia are uncertain and do not justify its cost. If you need sodium zirconium cyclosilicate for hyperkalaemia, 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 is hyperkalaemia?

Hyperkalaemia occurs when there is too much potassium in your blood. Potassium is an important nutrient that is found in many foods and drinks you consume. It helps your nerves and muscles function properly. Normally, your kidneys keep a balanced level of potassium in your body by removing any excess through urine. However, potassium builds up to abnormal levels in people with hyperkalaemia.

Patients with medical conditions such as diabetes, heart failure and kidney disease are at a higher risk of hyperkalaemia. Certain medicines, supplements or food can also contribute to hyperkalaemia. Mild hyperkalaemia typically does not cause symptoms. As the condition worsens, symptoms can include nausea, numbness, muscle weakness or irregular heartbeat.

What is sodium zirconium cyclosilicate?

Sodium zirconium cyclosilicate belongs to a group of medicines called potassium binders. It attaches to the excess potassium in the digestive tract to help remove it from the body. It is taken orally.

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Is this the right treatment for me?

There are different types of treatments available for hyperkalaemia. Your doctor may recommend you have sodium zirconium cyclosilicate 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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This summary is not, and should not be regarded as, a substitute for professional or medical advice. Please seek the advice of a qualified healthcare professional about any medical condition.

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