

## Ticagrelor for preventing thrombotic events in adults with acute coronary syndromes

### WHAT DOES THE GUIDANCE SAY?

Ticagrelor is recommended for listing on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) for government subsidy, when used with low-dose aspirin, to prevent heart attacks and strokes (thrombotic events) in certain adults with acute coronary syndromes (ACS).

### WHAT ARE THROMBOTIC EVENTS?

Fatty deposits (called plaques) can build up in the arteries over time. They can restrict blood flow and increase the risk of clots, which can cause heart attacks (sometimes called myocardial infarctions). Sometimes, a plaque may detach from the artery wall and cause a blockage. Heart attacks and strokes can happen because of a plaque blockage, which is called a thrombotic event.

### WHAT ARE ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROMES?

'Acute coronary syndromes' (ACS) is a term used to describe a group of three heart problems, including unstable angina (chest pain) and both major and minor heart attacks. They are caused when there is a reduction in blood supply to the heart. The most common symptoms of ACS are chest pain, nausea, sweating and breathlessness.

### WHAT IS TICAGRELOR?

You may know ticagrelor as Brilinta, a drug that can reduce or prevent blood clots and plaques from forming in arteries (known as an antiplatelet drug).

### HOW MUCH TICAGRELOR CAN I TAKE?

Ticagrelor is taken as a tablet (90 mg) twice a day with low-dose aspirin.

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### HOW LONG SHOULD I TAKE IT?

Ticagrelor should be taken with low-dose aspirin for up to 12 months.

### WHO CAN HAVE TICAGRELOR?

Adults with specific risk factors can apply for ticagrelor through MAF if they have:

- A condition called ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI; major heart attack);
- A condition called non-ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI; minor heart attack); or
- Been admitted to hospital with unstable angina (a condition when your heart does not get enough blood flow and oxygen)

Your doctor can advise if ticagrelor is a suitable treatment for you.

### WHY WAS TICAGRELOR RECOMMENDED FOR SUBSIDY?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Ticagrelor was recommended for subsidy (listing on MAF) because its benefits in preventing heart attacks and strokes for certain patients justify its cost.

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

The MAF helps people pay for expensive treatments that are clinically necessary. If your doctor prescribes ticagrelor for you, and you meet the MAF criteria, your treatment cost will be subsidised by 40% to 75%.

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