

Plain English Summary

Treatments for BRCA-mutated HER2-negative advanced breast cancer

What does the guidance say?

Olaparib is recommended for listing on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) for government funding from 1 September 2022 for patients with BRCA-mutated HER2-negative advanced breast cancer whose condition has worsened despite having chemotherapy.

Talazoparib is not recommended for subsidy for advanced breast cancer.

What is HER2-negative breast cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when abnormal cells grow uncontrollably in the ducts or lobes of the breast and spread into the surrounding breast tissue. When the cancer spreads to other parts of the body, this is known as advanced or metastatic disease.

Doctors test cancer cells to see if they have any biomarkers or genetic mutations that might help some treatments work better than others. Cancer cells that have a mutation in the BRCA 1/2 genes can be treated with targeted therapies.

Some breast cancers have too much of a protein called HER2 (human epidermal growth factor receptor 2) on the surface of their cells which encourages the cancer cells to divide and grow. This is known as HER2-positive breast cancer. If diagnostic tests show that cancer cells do not have a high level of the HER2 protein, this is known as HER2-negative breast cancer.

What is olaparib?

Olaparib belongs to a group of targeted medicines called PARP inhibitors. PARP (poly-ADP-ribose polymerase) is a protein (enzyme) that helps damaged cells repair themselves.

PARP inhibitors stop PARP from working in cancer cells that have BRCA mutations and cause the cells to die.

Olaparib is taken orally. Your doctor will tell you how much you need to take and how long you need to take it for.

Who can have olaparib?

Olaparib can be used by adults with advanced breast cancer if:

- they have previously received chemotherapy, but their condition has continued to worsen;
- they have a BRCA 1/2 genetic mutation confirmed by a diagnostic test; and
- they do not have HER2-positive breast cancer, confirmed by a diagnostic test.

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

Plain English Summary

Treatments for BRCA-mutated HER2-negative advanced breast cancer

Why was olaparib recommended for funding?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Olaparib was recommended because its benefit in helping delay the cancer from worsening and improving quality of life for certain patients with advanced breast cancer justifies its cost. Talazoparib was not recommended for subsidy because its benefit does not justify its cost compared to olaparib. If you need talazoparib for advanced breast cancer, 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 does listing on the MAF mean for me?

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

Olaparib has also been included on the Cancer Drug List (CDL) and is claimable under MediShield Life. The subsidy class and MediShield Life claim limits are available at go.gov.sg/moh-cancer-drug-list.

Published: 12 July 2022

 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

The Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE) was established by the Ministry of Health (Singapore) to drive better decision-making in healthcare through health technology assessment (HTA), clinical guidance and education. It publishes guidances on diagnosing, treating, and preventing different medical conditions based on the latest research information available worldwide.

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.

© Agency for Care Effectiveness, Ministry of Health, Republic of Singapore
All rights reserved. Reproduction of this publication in whole or part in any material form is prohibited without the prior written permission of the copyright holder.

To find out more about ACE visit www.ace-hta.gov.sg