

Plain English Summary

Epcoritamab for previously treated relapsed or refractory diffuse large B-cell lymphoma

What does the guidance say?

Epcoritamab is not recommended for government subsidy for patients with relapsed or refractory diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) who have had at least two previous treatments. It is claimable under MediShield Life, and the claim limits are available at go.gov.sg/moh-cancer-drug-list.

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. Epcoritamab was not recommended for government subsidy because its benefits for patients with relapsed or refractory DLBCL do not justify its cost. If you need epcoritamab for this condition, you can speak to a medical social worker to find out if there is financial assistance available to help with the cost of treatment.

What is diffuse large B-cell lymphoma?

Diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) is a type of fast-growing blood cancer that causes white blood cells (B-cell lymphocytes) to grow uncontrollably. It is the most common type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma and usually occurs in older adults, affecting up to 300 people each year in Singapore. Symptoms may include swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, fever, night sweats, weight loss and frequent infections.

Many patients with DLBCL achieve remission (that is, when the cancer is gone or no longer requires treatment) with chemoimmunotherapy. However, sometimes the cancer can come back after treatment (relapsed) or continues to worsen (refractory), and a different treatment will be given. Some patients with DLBCL may be able to have a stem cell transplant (haematopoietic cell transplant), where stem cells are removed from the patient's or donor's blood and then later put into the patient's body after high doses of chemotherapy are given. This helps to restore the bone marrow and rebuild the immune system.

Doctors determine which treatment is likely to work best by considering the age of the patient and their general health, as well as which treatments have been tried before.

What is epcoritamab?

Epcoritamab belongs to a group of targeted medicines called monoclonal antibodies. It helps the immune system find and kill cancer cells by specifically targeting the CD20 protein found on cancer cells and CD3 protein found on immune cells. It is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneously).

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Is this the right treatment for me?

There are different types of treatments available for DLBCL. Your doctor may recommend you have epcoritamab 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, and who can I approach if I want to find out whether there is financial assistance available to help with the cost of treatment?
- 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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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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