

Plain English Summary

Bevacizumab biosimilars for treating different types of cancer

What does the guidance say?

Bevacizumab biosimilar (Mvasi) is recommended for listing on the Standard Drug List (SDL) for government subsidy to treat certain types of cancers.

Bevacizumab reference biologic (Avastin) and other brands of bevacizumab biosimilar (Avamab and Vegzelma) are not recommended for subsidy to treat cancer.

Bevacizumab reference biologic (Avastin) and bevacizumab biosimilars (Avamab, Mvasi and Vegzelma) are claimable under MediShield Life, and the claim limits are available at go.gov.sg/moh-cancer-drug-list.

What is Mvasi?

Mvasi is a biosimilar of a biologic drug called bevacizumab (Avastin). It belongs to a group of medicines called vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) inhibitors that stop cells from growing blood vessels and slow or shrink tumour growth.

Mvasi is given as a drip into a vein (intravenously), usually as part of a combination of cancer medicines. Your doctor will tell you how much you need to take and how long you need to take it for.

What is a biosimilar?

Biologics are medicines that contain active ingredients extracted from living organisms. Biosimilars are also biologics. They are highly similar, but not identical to their reference biologics (i.e., the first biologic developed). Biosimilars have similar effectiveness, safety and quality records compared to their reference biologics and can be used to treat the same diseases.

Why was Mvasi recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Mvasi (bevacizumab biosimilar) was recommended because its benefit in improving survival for certain patients with different types of cancer justifies its cost.

Bevacizumab reference biologic (Avastin) and bevacizumab biosimilars (Avamab and Vegzelma) were not recommended for subsidy because their benefits do not justify their costs compared with Mvasi.

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Who can have Mvasi?

Mvasi is approved for use for different types of cancers including:

- cervical cancer
- colorectal cancer
- epithelial ovarian, fallopian tube, or primary peritoneal cancer
- non-squamous non-small-cell lung cancer, and
- malignant glioma (WHO Grade III and IV).

All approved uses have been recommended for subsidy. Patients must meet certain clinical criteria to receive treatment. Your doctor can advise if Mvasi is a suitable treatment for you.

What does listing Mvasi 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 up to 75% subsidy.

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 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

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