

Plain English Summary

Asciminib for previously treated Philadelphia chromosome-positive chronic myeloid leukaemia

What does the guidance say?

Asciminib 20 mg and 40 mg tablets are recommended for government funding for patients with previously treated chronic phase Philadelphia chromosome-positive chronic myeloid leukaemia (Ph+ CML) who meet certain clinical criteria. It is listed on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) and can be claimed under MediShield Life.

Asciminib 100 mg tablet is not recommended for funding for this condition.

What is chronic myeloid leukaemia?

Chronic myeloid leukaemia (CML) is a slow-growing cancer that affects the blood and bone marrow. It causes immature blood cells to grow uncontrollably and form “leukaemia cells” which do not function properly. As the number of leukaemia cells increases in the blood and bone marrow, there is less room for healthy blood cells such as red cells, white cells, and platelets. While CML can affect people of any age, it is more common in older adults.

Patients with CML typically have a mutation in structures that carry genetic information (chromosomes) within their leukaemia cells. This is called Philadelphia chromosome-positive CML (Ph+ CML). There are three phases of CML, and most patients are diagnosed in the first phase (chronic phase). Some patients do not have any symptoms at first. However, as the disease progresses, symptoms may include fatigue, shortness of breath, bleeding or bruising easily, fever, bone pains, night sweats, feeling full and unexplained weight loss. Patients also become more susceptible to infections.

Doctors test patients with CML for genetic mutations and determine their disease phase to advise which treatment is likely to work best.

What is asciminib?

Asciminib belongs to a group of medicines called tyrosine kinase inhibitors that stop cells from growing and dividing, to prevent cancer from spreading. It is taken orally. Your doctor will tell you how much you need and how long you need to take it for.

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Who can have asciminib?

Patients with chronic phase Ph+ CML can have asciminib if they:

- have already been treated with at least two tyrosine kinase inhibitors and the cancer has continued to worsen, or they were unable to tolerate those treatments; and
- do not have a T315I mutation.

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

Why was asciminib recommended for funding?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Asciminib was recommended for government funding for treating patients with chronic phase Ph+ CML who have had at least two previous cancer treatments with tyrosine kinase inhibitors as it was considered to be an acceptable use of healthcare resources at the price proposed by the company.

What does listing on the MAF mean for me?

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

Asciminib has also been included on the Cancer Drug List (CDL) and can be claimed under MediShield Life. The subsidy class and MediShield Life claim limits are available [here](#).

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 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)