

## Plain English Summary

# Donanemab and lecanemab for treating early Alzheimer's disease

## What does the guidance say?

Donanemab and lecanemab are not recommended for government subsidy for treating mild cognitive impairment and mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease.

## What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, gradually affecting memory, thinking and behaviour. It is believed to result from an abnormal build-up of proteins, which damages brain cells (neurons) over time and causes the brain's volume to shrink. Possible risk factors of Alzheimer's disease include age, family history, genetics and lifestyle.

Alzheimer's disease affects people in different ways, but the disease generally progresses in stages. The early stages include mild cognitive impairment, such as changes in memory and thinking skills, and mild dementia, which can cause forgetfulness, difficulty with planning, confusion about time and place, and a slower ability to grasp complex ideas.

As the disease progresses, it increasingly affects short-term and long-term memory, language, attention, judgement and other aspects of behaviour that can affect daily activities. While the rate and order of symptoms vary, the disease typically moves from mild to moderate and then to advanced stages, with each stage increasingly impacting daily life.

## What are donanemab and lecanemab?

Donanemab and lecanemab belong to a group of targeted medicines called monoclonal antibodies. They help the immune system find and remove a certain protein called amyloid-beta that builds up in the brain. Donanemab and lecanemab are given as a slow drip into a vein (intravenously).

## Why were they not recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Donanemab and lecanemab were not recommended for government subsidy because their benefits do not justify their costs. If you need donanemab or lecanemab for mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease, you can speak to a medical social worker to find out if there is financial assistance available to help with the cost of treatment.

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### Are these the right treatments for me?

There are different types of treatments available for Alzheimer's disease. Your doctor may recommend donanemab or lecanemab if they consider that these treatments are suitable for you. 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 have the treatment?

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 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 guidelines and education informed by the latest research information available.

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