

BC PharmaCare Drug Information

The drug below is being considered for possible coverage under the B.C. PharmaCare program. PharmaCare is a government-funded drug plan that helps British Columbians with the cost of eligible prescription drugs and specific medical supplies. For more information on PharmaCare, visit [Ministry of Health - PharmaCare](#).

PharmaCare reviews each drug for treating a specific illness or medical condition (known as an “indication”). If a decision is made to cover the drug, it will be only for that illness or condition.

In some cases, PharmaCare may cover a drug only for people who have the illness or condition and have not responded to other drugs used to treat that illness or condition.

For more information on PharmaCare’s drug coverage review process, see the last page of this information sheet.

Information about the drug	
Generic name (scientific name)	riociguat
Brand name	Adempas[®]
Manufacturer	Bayer Inc.
Indication	Pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH, World Health Organization (WHO) group 1 classification)
Has the drug been reviewed by the Common Drug Review (CDR)? (see the note below this table.)	Yes . For more information about the CDR’s review of riociguat (Adempas [®]), you can Search the CDR Reports .
Public input start date	Wednesday October 21, 2015
Public input closing date	Wednesday November 18, 2015 AT MIDNIGHT
How is the drug taken?	Adempas [®] is taken orally (by mouth).
How often is the drug is taken?	Adempas [®] is taken three times daily.

Information about the drug	
General drug and/or drug study information	<p>PAH is a disease where high blood pressure occurs in lung vessels (pulmonary arteries). In patients with PAH, these arteries get narrower, so the heart has to work harder to pump blood through them.</p> <p>Adempas® works by dilating the pulmonary arteries (the blood vessels that connect the heart to the lungs), lowering the high blood pressure and making it easier for the heart.</p> <p>Studies looked at the following outcomes to assess if Adempas® is helpful and safe for the treatment of PAH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to do 6 minutes walk distance (6MWD) test (total distance walked in 6 minutes) • Clinical worsening (including death and hospitalization) • Change in WHO functional classification of heart failure symptoms • Change in quality of life • Change in hemodynamic tests (eg. pulmonary vascular resistance) • Change in dyspnea (shortness of breath) symptoms • Bad reactions • Serious bad reactions • Withdrawals due to bad reaction (patients who stopped taking the drug) • Notable harms (e.g., low red blood cells)
Other considerations	None

Note:

The Common Drug Review (CDR) is a national organization that reviews drugs on behalf of Canadian public sector plans when manufacturers want to have the jurisdictions provide coverage for the drugs. For detailed information on B.C. PharmaCare's drug review process, including the role of the CDR in that process, see [The Drug Review Process in B.C. - Overview](#).

Cost of the drug under review compared to other drugs used to treat the same indication			
generic name (Brand Name) of Drug Comparator	PharmaCare Status (if and how the drug is already covered)	Usual Dose	Annual Cost of Therapy
riociguat (Adempas®)	Under Review	Three times daily	\$49,151
Endothelin Receptor Antagonists (ERAs)			
macitentan (Opsumit®)	Under Review	Once daily	\$49,184
ambrisentan (Volibris®)	Limited Coverage	Once daily	\$46,957
bosentan (generics)	Limited Coverage	Twice daily	\$12,651
Phosphodiesterase Type 5 Inhibitors (PDE-5i)			
sildenafil (Revatio™)	Non-Benefit	Three times daily	\$13,151
sildenafil (generics)	Limited Coverage	Three times daily	\$7,260

Cost of the drug under review compared to other drugs used to treat the same indication			
generic name (Brand Name) of Drug Comparator	PharmaCare Status (if and how the drug is already covered)	Usual Dose	Annual Cost of Therapy
tadalafil (Adcirca™)	Limited Coverage	Once daily	\$10,643
Parenteral Prostanoids (prostacyclins, prostacyclin analogues)			
epoprostenol (Caripul [®])	Limited Coverage	Continuous IV infusion	\$43,180 to \$61,860
epoprostenol (Flolan [®])	Limited Coverage	Continuous IV infusion	\$49,187 to \$71,347
treprostinil (Remodulin [®])	Limited Coverage	Continuous IV or SC infusion	\$95,612

IV = intravenous (in a vein); SC = subcutaneous (beneath the skin)

The Drug Review Process in B.C.

A manufacturer submits a request to the Ministry of Health (Ministry).

An independent group called the [Drug Benefit Council \(Council\)](#) gives advice to the Ministry. The Council looks at:

- whether the drug is safe and effective
- advice from a national group called the [Common Drug Review \(CDR\)](#)
- what the drug costs and whether it is a good value for the people of B.C.
- ethical considerations involved with covering or not covering the drug
- input from physicians, patients, caregivers, patient groups and drug submission sponsors

The Ministry makes PharmaCare coverage decisions by taking into account:

- the existing PharmaCare policies, programs and resources
- the evidence-informed advice of the Council
- the drugs already covered by PharmaCare that are used to treat similar medical conditions
- the overall cost of covering the drug

For more information about the B.C. Drug Review Process, visit: [The Drug Review Process in B.C. - Overview](#).

This document is intended for information only.

It does not take the place of advice from a physician or other qualified health care provider.