

Drug Coverage Decision for BC PharmaCare

About PharmaCare

BC PharmaCare is a publicly funded drug plan that helps B.C. residents pay for most prescription drugs and pharmacy services, and some medical devices and supplies.

Details of Drug Reviewed

Drug	isotretinoin
Brand name	Epuris™
Dosage form(s)	10 mg, 20 mg, 30 mg and 40 mg capsules
Manufacturer	Cipher Pharmaceuticals Inc.
Submission type	Ministry Initiated Review
Indication reviewed	For severe nodular and/or inflammatory acne, acne conglobata and recalcitrant acne
Canada's Drug Agency (CDA-AMC) Clinical Reimbursement Reviews (CRR) and Drug Benefit Council (DBC).	Isotretinoin (Epuris) was not reviewed by the Canada's Drug Agency (CDA-AMC) Clinical Reimbursement Reviews (CRR) or the Drug Benefit Council (DBC).
Drug Coverage Decision	Regular Benefit
Date	August 17 th , 2026; This decision supersedes the decision dated on October 10, 2013.
Reason(s)	Epuris is a formulation of isotretinoin that is bioequivalent to two other formulations of isotretinoin, Accutane® and Clarus™ under fed conditions and has improved bioavailability under fasted conditions.

- Accutane, Clarus, and Epuris are oral isotretinoin products that are generally considered clinically comparable, with similar efficacy and safety profiles for the treatment of severe acne.
- The pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA) successfully reached an agreement with the manufacturer that addresses the cost and value concerns identified in the previous listing decision. As a result, the Ministry initiated a review to assess these updated cost and value considerations.

The drug review process in B.C.

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

An independent national organization called Canada's Drug Agency (CDA-AMC) provides evidence-based recommendations to public drug plans across Canada through its reimbursement review process. As part of the CDA-AMC's Clinical Reimbursement Review process, the Canadian Drug Expert Committee (CDEC) makes reimbursement recommendations for non-oncology pharmaceuticals to the participating federal, provincial, and territorial publicly funded drug plans. In developing its recommendations, the CDEC considers:

- whether the drug is safe and effective
- what the drug costs and whether funding it provides good value
- ethical considerations of covering or not covering the drug
- input from physicians, patients, caregivers, patient groups and drug submission sponsors

The Ministry makes a BC PharmaCare coverage decision by considering:

- existing BC PharmaCare policies, programs and resources
- the evidence-informed advice of the CDA-AMC
- the recommendations and reimbursement conditions of the CDEC
- if a Ministry Initiated review, the advice of an independent expert group called the Drug Benefit Council (DBC)
- BC-specific patient input collected through the Your Voice website
- drugs already covered by BC PharmaCare that treat similar medical conditions
- the overall cost of covering the drug
- the outcomes of pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA) negotiations with manufacturers

Visit [BC PharmaCare](#) and [Drug reviews](#) for more information.

This document is intended for information only.

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

