

# 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)	<b>tesamorelin</b>
Brand name	<b>Egrifta™</b>
Manufacturer	Theratechnologies Inc.
Indication	Lipodystrophy in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-infected patients
Has the drug been reviewed by the Common Drug Review (CDR)?	Yes For more information about the CDR’s review of tesamorelin (Egrifta™) , you can <a href="#">Search the CDR Reports</a> .
Public input start date	Thursday June 23, 2016
Public input closing date	Thursday July 21, 2016 <b>AT MIDNIGHT</b>
How is the drug taken?	Egrifta™ is taken by injection under the skin of the abdomen (belly).
How often is the drug is taken?	Egrifta™ is taken by daily injection.

Information about the drug	
General drug and/or drug study information	<p>Patients with HIV may have fat that builds up in some places and goes away in others. This is called “lipodystrophy”. Some patients with HIV who have lipodystrophy can develop excess abdominal fat. This excess abdominal fat is called “visceral adipose tissue (VAT)”, which is different from the soft fat that usually develops under the surface of the skin. VAT is hard fat that surrounds the person’s abdominal organs, lasts a long time and may not go away with diet and exercise alone.</p> <p>Egrifta™ causes the pituitary gland (endocrine gland) to release a growth hormone which decreases belly fat.</p> <p>Studies looked at the following to determine how safe and effective Egrifta™ was in reducing excess belly fat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of excess belly fat that was reduced</li> <li>• Circumference of the waist</li> <li>• Body image</li> <li>• Quality of life</li> <li>• Bad reactions</li> <li>• Serious bad reactions</li> <li>• Patients leaving the trial due to bad reactions</li> <li>• Deaths</li> </ul>
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
tesamorelin (Egrifta™)	Under Review	One injection daily	\$39,411

### **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 \(DBC\)](#) gives advice to the Ministry. The DBC 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 DBC
- 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.