

BC PharmaCare Drug Information

The drug below is being considered for coverage under the BC PharmaCare program. PharmaCare is a government-funded drug plan that helps B.C. residents with the cost of eligible prescription drugs and medical supplies. For more information about PharmaCare, visit the [PharmaCare website](#).

PharmaCare reviews each drug for treating a specific illness or medical condition (also called an “indication”). If PharmaCare decides to cover a drug, that coverage applies only to the indication(s) specified. In some cases, PharmaCare covers a drug only for people who have not responded to other drugs that treat the same indication.

More information about the PharmaCare drug review process is provided on the last page of this document.

Drug information	
Generic name (scientific name)	faricimab
Brand name	Vabysmo®
Manufacturer	Hoffmann-La Roche Limited
Indication	For the treatment of macular edema secondary to retinal vein occlusion (RVO).
Has the drug been reviewed by CDA-AMC, or will CDA-AMC be reviewing it? (See note below.)	Yes For more information about the CDA-AMC Reimbursement Review (CRR) of faricimab (Vabysmo®), Search the CDA-AMC Reports .
Public input start date	Wednesday , November 20, 2024
Public input closing date	Tuesday , December 17, 2024, at 11:59 pm
How is the drug taken?	Faricimab is given by intravitreal injection. It is injected into the space in the back of the eye called the vitreous cavity. The procedure is usually performed by a trained retinal specialist in an office setting.
How often is the drug taken?	Faricimab is injected every 4 weeks (approximately every 28 days plus or minus 7 days) for the first 6 months. Monitoring between the dosing visits should be scheduled based on the patient’s status and at the physician’s discretion.

Drug information

General drug and/or drug study information

Faricimab is used to treat macular edema secondary to retinal vein occlusion (RVO). RVO is a blockage of the veins in the retina that carry blood away from the eye. The blockage can lead to fluid leak into the back of the eye, also known as macular edema. Patients with RVO usually experience visual symptoms, including vision loss and alteration, eventually leading to blindness if untreated. The blockage caused by RVO cannot be reversed, but there are ways in which it can be managed, using treatments that may slow down the progression of vision loss and even improve vision.

Faricimab is a bispecific monoclonal antibody, an artificial protein that simultaneously blocks the action of two proteins that stimulate the formation of blood vessels. Faricimab treats macular edema secondary to RVO by stabilizing the blood vessels in the retina.

Studies looked at the following:

- Safety and efficacy of faricimab in comparison to aflibercept
- Changes from baseline in best corrected visual acuity (BCVA), measured using the Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study (ETDRS) eye chart. BCVA is the best possible vision an eye can achieve with the use of glasses or contact lenses. ETDRS is a chart that measures visual acuity, though it has not been validated in patients with RVO. Scoring is based on the number of letters correctly identified.
- Frequency of faricimab injections
- Changes from baseline in macular thickness, measured by central subfield thickness (CST), and the proportion of patients with absence of macular edema and fluid. The macula is a small area in the center of the retina (the light-sensitive layer of tissue in the back of the eye) responsible for central vision.
- Change in National Eye Institute 25-Item Visual Functioning Questionnaire (NEI VFQ-25) composite score, to assess vision-related functioning and health-related quality of life (HRQoL)
- Bad reactions
- Serious bad reactions
- Patients leaving the trial due to bad reactions.
- Bad reactions of special interest, like endophthalmitis.

Drug information	
Other considerations	None

Note:

CDA-AMC ([Canada's Drug Agency-L'Agence des Médicaments du Canada](#)) is a national organization that reviews drugs on behalf of Canadian public sector plans when drug manufacturers want those plans to provide coverage for the drug. For detailed information about the PharmaCare drug review process, including the role of the CDA-AMC Reimbursement Review (CRR) in that process, visit [How PharmaCare Decides Which Drugs to Cover](#).

Cost of the drug 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)	Dosage Form	Usual Dose	Cost of Therapy ^a
faricimab (Vabysmo)	Under Review	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 months, followed by every 8 to 16 weeks	Year 1: \$9,450 to \$13,500 Subsequent: \$5,400 to \$9,450
<i>Anti-Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (VEGF) inhibitors</i>				
aflibercept 2 mg (Eylea)	This drug is provided through the BC Retinal Diseases Treatment Program	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 doses followed by every 8 to 16 weeks	Year 1: \$9,926 to \$14,180 Subsequent: \$5,672 to \$9,926
bevacizumab (Avastin)	This drug is provided through the BC Retinal Diseases Treatment Program	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 doses followed by every 6 to 8 weeks	Year 1: \$138 to \$173 Subsequent: \$121 to \$156

^a Price as per CDA Pharmacoeconomic Review Report for faricimab (Vabysmo®) RVO.

Cost of the drug 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)	Dosage Form	Usual Dose	Cost of Therapy ^a
bevacizumab (biosimilar)	Non-Benefit for nAMD Coverage for other indications provided by BC Cancer	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 doses followed by every 6 to 8 weeks	Year 1: \$93 to \$116 Subsequent: \$81 to \$104
ranibizumab (Lucentis)	This drug is provided through the BC Retinal Diseases Treatment Program	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 doses followed by every 1 or 3 months	Year 1: \$10,262 to \$20,524 Subsequent: \$8,552 to \$20,524
ranibizumab (biosimilar)	Under Review	Solution for intravitreal injection	Every 4 weeks for the first 6 doses followed by every 1 or 3 months	Year 1: \$5,490 to \$11,880 Subsequent: \$4,950 to \$11,880

^a Price as per CDA Pharmacoeconomic Review Report for faricimab (Vabysmo®) RVO.

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 [Canada's Drug Agency-L'Agence des médicaments du Canada \(CDA-AMC\)](#)
- what the drug costs and whether it is a good value to the citizens of B.C.
- ethical considerations related to 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:

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

For more information about the drug review process in B.C., visit: the [How PharmaCare decides which drugs to cover](#).

This document provides information only.

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