

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)	mepolizumab
Brand name	Nucala
Manufacturer	GlaxoSmithKline Inc.
Indication	Severe chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps
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 mepolizumab (Nucala), you can Search the CDR Reports .
Public input start date	Wednesday, August 31, 2022
Public input closing date	Wednesday, September 28, 2022, AT MIDNIGHT
How is the drug taken?	Mepolizumab is injected subcutaneously (under the skin).
How often is the drug taken?	Mepolizumab is injected once every 4 weeks.

General drug and/or drug study information

Mepolizumab is used as an add-on maintenance treatment for severe chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps (CRSwNP). Chronic rhinosinusitis is long-lasting inflammation of the nasal passages and sinuses that can occur with or without nasal polyps. Nasal polyps are painless, noncancerous growths in the lining of the nasal passages and sinuses. Symptoms of chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps can include a stuffy or runny nose, loss or decreased sense of smell, facial pressure or pain, postnasal drip, pain in your upper teeth, snoring, and headaches.

Mepolizumab is a monoclonal antibody. Mepolizumab works by blocking a specific protein called interleukin-5. By blocking the action of interleukin-5, mepolizumab limits the production of eosinophils in the body. Eosinophils are a type of disease-fighting white blood cell. Although they are essential for defending the body, their activity can cause inflammation. By limiting the production of eosinophils, mepolizumab may help to control the symptoms of rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps.

Studies looked at the following:

- Severity of nasal polyps:
 - Changes from baseline in total endoscopic nasal polyps scores
- Nasal obstruction:
 - Changes from baseline in nasal obstruction visual analogue scale (VAS^a) scores
- Symptoms:
 - Changes from baseline in nasal symptom composite VAS scores
 - Changes from baseline in nasal symptoms and facial pain composite VAS scores
 - Changes from baseline in loss of smell VAS symptom scores
- Response to treatment:
 - Response to treatment based on total endoscopic nasal polyp score and sino-nasal outcome test (SNOT-22) scores
- Changes from baseline in nasal congestion
- Changes from baseline in health-related quality of life (HRQoL)
 - Sino-nasal outcome test (SNOT-22)
 - 36-Item Short Form Survey (SF-36)
- Changes from baseline in systemic steroid use for nasal polyps
- Time to first nasal polyp surgery
- Work Productivity:
 - Changes from baseline in Work Productivity and Activity Impairment Questionnaire or WPAI-GH score
 - Work time missed due to health
 - Impairment while working due to health
 - Overall work impairment due to health
- Bad reactions

Information about the drug	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious bad reactions • Patients leaving the trial due to bad reactions • Bad reactions of special interest: For example, systemic site reactions, localized injection site reactions, serious infections, potential opportunistic infections, serious cardiac disorders, blood clots in the veins, blood vessel blockages (serious ischemic events).
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. There are no comparators in this case.				
generic name (Brand Name) of Drug Comparator	PharmaCare Status (if and how the drug is already covered)	Dosage Form	Usual Dose	Cost of Therapy
Mepolizumab (Nucala)	Under Review Limited coverage for eosinophilic asthma	Vial of powder for SC ^b injection Pre-filled syringe for SC injection Pre-filled autoinjector for SC injection	100 mg every 4 weeks	\$26,460 ^c

^a The Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) is a scale that is used in questionnaires to measure things such as pain and allergy symptoms. It consists in a ten centimeter line upon which a person can select a point which best reflects their level of discomfort, going from left (least) to right (most).

^b SC means subcutaneous (under the skin).

^c Manufacturer's submitted price plus 5% markup.

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.