

Ticagrelor for acute coronary syndromes

NICE 'technology appraisal guidance' advises on when and how drugs and other treatments should be used in the NHS.

This leaflet is about when **ticagrelor** should be used to treat people with acute coronary syndromes in the NHS in England and Wales. It explains guidance (advice) from NICE (the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence). It is written for people with acute coronary syndromes but it may also be useful for their families or carers or for anyone with an interest in the condition.

It does not describe acute coronary syndromes or the treatments in detail – a member of your healthcare team should discuss these with you. You can get more information from the organisations listed on page 4.



This may not be the only possible treatment for acute coronary syndromes. Your healthcare team should talk to you about whether it is suitable for you and about other treatment options available.

What has NICE said?

NICE recommends ticagrelor combined with low-dose aspirin for up to a year as a possible treatment for some people with acute coronary syndromes (see below).

Who can have ticagrelor?

You should be able to have ticagrelor if you:

- have a condition called ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (major heart attack) that your cardiologist intends to treat with a procedure to widen your narrowed artery (called primary percutaneous coronary intervention)
- a condition called non-ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (mild heart attack) **or**
- have been admitted to hospital with unstable angina.

If you are treated with ticagrelor because you have unstable angina, this diagnosis should be confirmed, ideally by a cardiologist, before you are offered more treatment with ticagrelor.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work, and also at how well they work in relation to how much they cost the NHS.

NICE recommended ticagrelor because it works better than other treatments available on the NHS. Although it also costs more than other treatments, this was justified by the benefits it provided.

Acute coronary syndromes

Acute coronary syndromes is the term used for a group of heart problems. It includes unstable angina, and two types of heart attacks, non-ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (mild heart attack) and ST-segment-elevation myocardial infarction (major heart attack).

Ticagrelor

Ticagrelor is a drug that can reduce or prevent blood clots from forming in arteries (known as antiplatelet drugs). It is taken as a tablet twice a day and should be taken with low-dose aspirin.

What does this mean for me?

When NICE recommends a treatment, the NHS must make sure it is available to those people it could help, normally within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

So, if you have an acute coronary syndrome, and you and your doctor think that ticagrelor is the right treatment for you (see 'What has NICE said?' on page 2), you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS. Please see www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance if you think you are eligible for the treatment but it is not available.

More information

The organisations below can provide more information and support for people with acute coronary syndromes. NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

- Action Heart, 01384 292233, www.actionheart.com
- British Heart Foundation, 0300 330 3311, www.bhf.org.uk
- Blood Pressure Association, 0845 241 0989, www.bpassoc.org.uk
- British Cardiac Patients Association, 01223 845845, www.bcpa.co.uk
- HEART UK – The Cholesterol Charity, 0845 450 5988, www.heartuk.org.uk

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more. Your local patient advice and liaison service (usually known as ‘PALS’) may be able to give you more information and support. If you live in Wales you should speak to NHS Direct Wales for information on who to contact.

About NICE

NICE produces guidance (advice) for the NHS about preventing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions. The guidance is written by independent experts, including healthcare professionals and people representing patients and carers. They consider the evidence on the condition and treatments, the views of patients and carers and the experiences of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, and consider the costs involved. Staff working in the NHS are expected to follow this guidance.

To find out more about NICE, its work and how it reaches decisions, see www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance

This leaflet and other versions of the guidance aimed at healthcare professionals are available at www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA236

The NICE website has a screen reader service called Browsealoud, which allows you to listen to our guidance. Click on the Browsealoud logo on the NICE website to use this service.

We encourage NHS and voluntary organisations to use text from this leaflet in their own information about acute coronary syndromes.

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