

Everolimus for preventing organ rejection in liver transplantation

Information for the public

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What has NICE said?

Everolimus (Certican) is not recommended for preventing organ rejection in people having a liver transplant.

What does this mean for me?

If you are already taking everolimus for preventing organ rejection after a liver transplant, you should be able to continue taking it until you and your doctor decide it is the right time to stop.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work in relation to how much they cost compared with other treatments available on the NHS.

It was not clear from the evidence whether everolimus provides enough benefit to patients

to justify its high cost, so it was not recommended.

The condition and the treatment

Liver failure happens when the liver is unable to repair itself and stops working properly. Some of the main causes are an infection called hepatitis, disease (such as cirrhosis) and paracetamol poisoning. Symptoms of a failing liver include very itchy and yellow skin, loss of weight, a swollen tummy and passing black stools.

If the liver is damaged so much that it might fail completely, a liver transplant may be considered. The liver is removed and replaced with a healthy liver from a human donor. Because the liver comes from another person, the body's immune system recognises it as different and tries to destroy (reject) it. This means that after a liver transplant, you will have to take medication for the rest of your life to stop your body rejecting the new liver.

Everolimus (Certican) is a drug that stops the body's immune system rejecting the new liver.

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more.

Sources of advice and support

- British Liver Trust, 0800 652 7330, www.britishlivertrust.org.uk
- Liver4Life, 0800 074 3494, www.liver4life.org.uk
- Addenbrooke's Liver Transplant Association, www.alt.a.org.uk

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Accreditation

