



Medicine: imiquimod 3.75% cream (brand name: Zyclara®) for the treatment of actinic keratosis

Meda Pharmaceuticals

What is imiquimod for?

Imiquimod is used for the treatment of a skin condition called actinic keratosis. Actinic keratosis is a pre-cancerous, abnormal skin growth that can develop after too much exposure to sunlight. It is most often found on the head or scalp. Imiquimod is for actinic keratosis of the full face or balding scalp in adults whose immune systems are working normally (immunocompetent) where other topical treatments (such as creams and gels) cannot be used or are less appropriate.

How does imiquimod work?

Imiquimod is a cream that is applied to the affected areas of skin. When applied, imiquimod activates the body's immune system to recognise and destroy the abnormal actinic keratosis cells.

What has SMC said?

SMC has accepted imiquimod for the treatment of adults with actinic keratosis as described above. This acceptance is restricted to use in patients where a large area is affected by actinic keratosis (greater than 25cm²).



Why has SMC said this?

SMC looks at how well new medicines work compared with current treatments available in Scotland and in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer (for example, if the medicine has to be given at a clinic or side effects have to be monitored).

SMC carefully considers every new medicine to make sure it benefits patients and is considered to be an acceptable use of the limited resources in NHSScotland. When SMC assesses a medicine it takes account of the needs of all patients in NHSScotland, not just those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Clinical trial and economic evidence from the company that makes the medicine.
- Advice from healthcare professionals about any benefits of the new medicine compared to current treatment, along with how the new medicine is likely to be used.

- Information from patient groups about the potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.

After careful consideration of the evidence, SMC was able to accept imiquimod for use in NHSScotland.

What does SMC's decision mean for me?

If your healthcare professional thinks that imiquimod for use as described above is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have your treatment on the NHS in Scotland. For further information see:

Medicines in Scotland: What's the right treatment for me?

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/medicinesbooklet.aspx



More information

The organisation below can provide more information and support for people with actinic keratosis and their families. SMC is not responsible for the content of any information provided by external organisations.

Melanoma Action and Support Scotland (MASScot)



<http://www.masscot.org.uk>



0141 946 2017

You can find out more about imiquimod (Zyclara) in the European public assessment report (EPAR) summary for the public by searching for the medicine name on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) website.



<http://www.ema.europa.eu>

Date advice published: 11 November 2019

SMC No: (SMC2211)