

Medicine: cannabidiol (brand name: Epidyolex®)

GW Research Ltd

The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has assessed cannabidiol for the treatment of patients aged 2 years and over with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome (a rare form of epilepsy). It is used together with another medicine called clobazam. This document summarises the SMC decision and what it means for patients.

What has SMC said?

After careful consideration, SMC has accepted cannabidiol for the treatment of Lennox-Gastaut syndrome (LGS) as described above

This SMC advice takes into account a confidential discount offered by the pharmaceutical company that improves the cost-effectiveness of cannabidiol. In addition, SMC was able to apply a more flexible approach* in the assessment, as it is for a rare condition.

What does SMC's decision mean for patients?

If your healthcare professional thinks that cannabidiol for use as described above is the right medicine for you or your child, you or they should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland.



What is cannabidiol used for?

Cannabidiol is used to treat seizures in patients aged 2 years and over with LGS, which is a rare form of epilepsy that begins in childhood. LGS is a long-term condition with symptoms appearing in early childhood and developing over time. It typically causes multiple prolonged seizures that are difficult to treat. The most common types of seizures are atonic and tonic seizures. These are called 'drop seizures' because during these, the patient will suddenly fall to the ground. These are particularly distressing seizures and often cause injury to the face, teeth or head. Patients can also have severe learning disabilities, sleep problems, autism and issues with mobility and feeding.

How does cannabidiol work?

It is not fully understood how cannabidiol works. It is thought to act on a number of different proteins that control the excitability of nerve cells. These actions are thought to reduce the chances of excessive electrical activity developing in the brain and causing seizures.

*<https://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/media/4731/pace-overview-document.pdf>

How does SMC make its decision?

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.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Evidence from the company about how well the medicine works compared with current treatments available in Scotland, in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer.
- Information from patient groups about the potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.
- 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.

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.

You can find more detailed information about the SMC assessment of cannabidiol by looking at the SMC Detailed Advice Document (SMC2263).

More information

The organisations below can provide more information and support for people with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and their families. SMC is not responsible for the content of any information provided by external organisations.

Epilepsy Action



<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk>



0808 800 5050

Epilepsy Connections



<https://www.epilepsyconnections.org.uk>



0141 248 4125

Epilepsy Scotland



<https://www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk>



0808 800 2200

You can find out more about cannabidiol (Epidyolex®) 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>