

Quick reference guide

Adefovir dipivoxil and peginterferon alfa-2a for the treatment of chronic hepatitis B

1 Guidance

This guidance does not apply to people with chronic hepatitis B known to be co-infected with hepatitis C, hepatitis D or HIV.

- 1.1 Peginterferon alfa-2a is recommended as an option for the initial treatment of adults with chronic hepatitis B (HBeAg-positive or HBeAg-negative), within its licensed indications.
- 1.2 Adefovir dipivoxil is recommended as an option for the treatment of adults with chronic hepatitis B (HBeAg-positive or HBeAg-negative) within its licensed indications if:
- treatment with interferon alfa or peginterferon alfa-2a has been unsuccessful, or
 - a relapse occurs after successful initial treatment, or
 - treatment with interferon alfa or peginterferon alfa-2a is poorly tolerated or contraindicated.
- 1.3 Adefovir dipivoxil should not normally be given before treatment with lamivudine. It may be used either alone or in combination with lamivudine when:
- treatment with lamivudine has resulted in viral resistance, or
 - lamivudine resistance is likely to occur rapidly (for example, in the presence of highly replicative hepatitis B disease), and development of lamivudine resistance is likely to have an adverse outcome (for example, if a flare of the infection is likely to precipitate decompensated liver disease).
- 1.4 Drug treatment with peginterferon alfa-2a or adefovir dipivoxil should be initiated only by an appropriately qualified healthcare professional with expertise in the management of viral hepatitis. Continuation of therapy under shared-care arrangements with a general practitioner is appropriate.

2 Implementation

This appraisal is supported by the following implementation tools available on our website (www.nice.org.uk/TA096):

- a national costing report, which estimates the overall resource impact associated with implementation
- a local costing template: a simple spreadsheet that can be used to estimate the local cost of implementation.

Suggestions for audit to measure compliance locally can be found in the full guidance (see 'Further information').

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This guidance is written in the following context

This guidance represents the view of the Institute, which was arrived at after careful consideration of the available evidence. Healthcare professionals are expected to take it fully into account when exercising their clinical judgement. This guidance does not, however, override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Further information

Quick reference guide

This has been distributed to healthcare professionals working in the NHS in England and Wales (see www.nice.org.uk/TA096distributionlist). It is available from www.nice.org.uk/TA096quickrefguide

For printed copies, phone the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 (quote reference number N0975).

Full guidance

This contains the following sections:

- 1 Guidance
- 2 Clinical need and practice
- 3 The technology
- 4 Evidence and interpretation
- 5 Recommendations for further research
- 6 Implications for the NHS
- 7 Implementation and audit
- 8 Related guidance
- 9 Review of guidance.

The full guidance also gives details of the Appraisal Committee, the sources of evidence considered and suggested criteria for audit. It is available from www.nice.org.uk/TA096guidance

Information for the public

Information for people with chronic hepatitis B, their families, and the public is available from www.nice.org.uk/TA096publicinfo

For printed copies, phone the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 (quote reference number N0976).

Related guidance

For information about NICE guidance that has been issued or is in development, see the website (www.nice.org.uk).

Interferon alfa (pegylated and non-pegylated) and ribavirin for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C. *NICE Technology Appraisal guidance* No. 75 (2004). Available from www.nice.org.uk/TA075. A review of this guidance is ongoing.