

DRUG REVIEW

January, 2023



VABYSMO® - A new treatment for chronic eye conditions related to macular edema

The macula is the part of the eye responsible for sharp, clear central vision. Macular edema occurs when the macula becomes swollen from a buildup of fluid due to eye damage. Major causes of macular edema include diabetes and aging resulting in Diabetic Macular Edema (DME) and Neovascular Age-Related Macular Degeneration (nAMD) respectively.

Diabetic Macular Edema is a complication of diabetes caused by elevated blood sugar levels, leading to damaged blood vessels in the eyes. Neovascular Age-Related Macular degeneration is a chronic, progressive eye disease involving the formation of abnormal blood vessels underneath the macula. If left untreated, both conditions can lead to irreversible vision loss, which significantly reduces patients' quality of life and independence. Among Canadians, approximately 60,000 individuals are diagnosed with DME, and the numbers are anticipated to increase. In 2015, nAMD was the third most common cause of visual impairment globally.

The goals of therapy for DME and nAMD are to provide recovery of vision and to maintain that vision, while reducing the likelihood of blindness. Standard first line treatment involves the use of anti-Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (anti-VEGF) agents that are injected directly into the affected eye(s). Current anti-VEGF agents that are available for nAMD include Beovu, Eylea and Lucentis. For DME, current drug treatment options include Eylea and Lucentis. These therapies require frequent injection schedules (up to every 12 weeks for Beovu, up to every 8 weeks for Eylea and every month for Lucentis).

Vabysmo is a new injectable eye medication approved by Health Canada for the treatment of DME and nAMD. It targets two different pathways to promote blood vessel formation.

Through its unique dual mechanism of action, Vabysmo provides an alternative treatment option with a prolonged treatment interval of up to 16 weeks. Clinical trials have also shown that Vabysmo demonstrated comparable efficacy and safety to Eylea.

Vabysmo has comparable price to other drugs indicated for DME and nAMD. As a new effective and safe treatment option, Vabysmo will be covered under special authorization for ClaimSecure groups subscribed to Managed plans similar to existing anti-VEGF therapies.

Drug Name	Vabysmo®
Drug Ingredients	Faricimab
Estimated Annual Cost for DME	\$9,450 to \$13,500 (Year 1) \$5,400 to \$9,450 (Year 2 onwards)
Estimated Annual Cost for nAMD	\$12,150 (Year 1) \$5,400 to \$9,450 (Year 2 onwards)
Coverage Details	Special Authorization for Managed Formularies

References:

1. Vabysmo Product Monograph. Roche Canada. September 2022.
2. Browning DJ, Stewart MW, Lee C. Diabetic macular edema: Evidence-based management. Indian J Ophthalmol. 2018 Dec;66(12):1736-1750.
3. Bauman CR. Wet age-related macular degeneration: treatment advances to reduce the injection burden. Am J Manag Care. 2020 May;26(5 Suppl):S103-S111.

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