

## Plain English Summary

# Treatments for advanced prostate cancer

## What does the guidance say?

Darolutamide, degarelix, enzalutamide and olaparib are recommended for government funding for patients with advanced prostate cancer who meet certain criteria. They are listed on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) and claimable under MediShield Life.

Apalutamide and cabazitaxel are not recommended for MAF for patients with advanced prostate cancer. They are claimable under MediShield Life.

## What is advanced prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer occurs when abnormal cells in the prostate gland grow uncontrollably and form a mass (tumour). These cancer cells need male sex hormones (androgens) like testosterone to grow. Hormone therapy, also known as androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) is used to lower testosterone levels and slow the growth of cancer cells. Doctors classify prostate cancer according to the type of treatment that is likely to work:

- Hormone-sensitive or hormone-dependent prostate cancer means that it needs hormones (androgens) in order to grow and can be treated with ADT.
- Castrate-resistant prostate cancer means that the cancer cells keep growing even when the amount of testosterone is reduced to very low levels with treatment.

When cancer cells spread from the prostate to other parts of the body, or when they become resistant to hormone treatments, this is known as advanced disease.

## What are darolutamide, degarelix, enzalutamide and olaparib?

Darolutamide and enzalutamide belong to a group of medicines called second-generation anti-androgens which stop testosterone from reaching cancer cells. They are taken orally.

Degarelix is a hormone therapy called a GnRH antagonist that stops the production of testosterone. It is given as an injection under the skin (subcutaneously).

Olaparib belongs to a group of medicines called PARP inhibitors. It is used for patients with prostate cancer who have a specific genetic mutation and who have already tried second-generation anti-androgens, but the cancer continues to worsen. It is taken orally.

Your doctor will tell you which treatment is most suitable for you, how much you need to take and how long you need to take it for.

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## Who can have these treatments?

Patients with advanced hormone-dependent prostate cancer can have degarelix.

Darolutamide or enzalutamide are used in combination with ADT for treating:

- High-risk non-metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer; and
- Metastatic hormone-sensitive prostate cancer.

Enzalutamide, in combination with ADT, is also used for treating:

- Metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer.

Olaparib is used for treating patients with metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer if:

- They have a BRCA 1/2 or ATM genetic mutation confirmed by a diagnostic test; and
- Their cancer has continued to worsen despite prior treatment with a second-generation anti-androgen therapy (like abiraterone, enzalutamide, apalutamide or darolutamide).

ADT should be continued during treatment with olaparib.

Your doctor can advise if any of these treatments are suitable for you.

## Why were these treatments recommended for funding?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Darolutamide, degarelix, enzalutamide and olaparib were recommended for government funding because their benefit in improving survival for certain patients with advanced prostate cancer justifies their costs.

Apalutamide and cabazitaxel were not recommended for MAF because their benefits do not justify their costs. If you need one of these treatments for advanced prostate cancer, you can speak to a medical social worker to find out if there is other financial assistance available to help with the cost of treatment.

## What does listing on MAF mean for me?

The MAF helps people pay for treatments that are clinically effective and cost effective. If your doctor prescribes darolutamide, degarelix, enzalutamide or olaparib for you, and you meet the MAF criteria, your treatment cost will be subsidised by 40% to 75%.

Apalutamide, cabazitaxel, darolutamide, degarelix, enzalutamide, and olaparib have been included on the Cancer Drug List (CDL) and are claimable under MediShield Life. The subsidy class and MediShield Life claim limits are available at [go.gov.sg/moh-cancer-drug-list](http://go.gov.sg/moh-cancer-drug-list).

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