

Medicines Management Team Advisory Summary

Eflornithine cream (Vaniqa®) is considered an intervention of low clinical value.

Introduction

Eflornithine 11.5% cream is an irreversible inhibitor of ornithine decarboxylase, an enzyme involved in the production of the hair shaft by the hair follicle. It slows hair growth and reduces the size of the hairs so they become less coarse and less visible.

There is limited evidence for efficacy and patient satisfaction with eflornithine cream and there are no trials comparing eflornithine with other hirsutism treatments.

Formulary Status

3Ts	BCAP	ICID
Not considered	Not on formulary	Amber – specialist recommendation only

Prescribers should consider that:

- Hirsutism may be self-managed with mechanical and cosmetic means at no cost to the NHS.
- Eflornithine does not offer permanent hair removal, it slows hair growth such that users require less frequent hair removal by other methods (e.g. shaving, plucking, waxing). Hair removal will need to continue (regrowth occurs within 8 weeks).
- **It is important that the patient is properly assessed and underlying causes addressed as hirsutism can result from serious medical conditions or from medication.**

Recommended Actions

- **Patients should be encouraged to self-manage hirsutism with mechanical and cosmetic means.**
- **Discontinue treatment after 4 months if not effective.**
- **Ensure the patient understands that hair removal will need to continue.**
- **Ensure prescriptions are for a maximum supply of 30g per month, i.e. 60g tube supplied bimonthly or less.**

Wiltshire CCG Cost Implications

Eflornithine prescribing costs up to **£341 per patient per year**, based on the price of £56.87 for 60g tube (at least 2 months treatment).

In the 12 month period up to Jan 2017, 243 tubes were dispensed costing £13,851.91

References

1. Summary of Product Characteristics. Vaniqa Sep 2014
<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/21243>
2. PrescQipp Drop List Bulletin 57 December 2013 Accessed February 2017 v2.0
www.prescqipp.info/-eflornithine/send/76-eflornithine/858-bulletin-57-eflornithine
3. Drug Tariff March 2017

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