



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
CENTRE *for* EXCELLENCE  
*in* HIV/AIDS

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Dear Healthcare Provider:

**RE: Updates to BC-CfE HIV Drug Treatment and Prevention Programs**

**1. BC-CfE Drug Formulary Addition: Dolutegravir-lamivudine (Dovato®)**

Dolutegravir-lamivudine 50-300 mg tablet (Dovato®) is now available through the BC-CfE Drug Formulary. Dovato® contains dolutegravir, an integrase strand transfer inhibitor (INSTI) and lamivudine, a nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI).

Dovato® is an acceptable option for the treatment of HIV-1 infection in adults when the following conditions are met:

- In antiretroviral (ART)-naïve persons: baseline HIV-RNA <500,000 copies/mL, CD4 count >200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, resistance test demonstrates no resistance to dolutegravir or lamivudine, *and* absence of hepatitis B (HBV) chronic infection
- In virologically stable, suppressed adults: no prior resistance to dolutegravir or lamivudine, no prior virologic failure to NRTIs or INSTIs, virologically suppressed greater than 6 months, *and* absence of HBV chronic infection

Prescribing and administration:

- The recommended dose of Dovato® is one tablet orally once daily with or without food.
- Use of dolutegravir-containing products should be avoided in individuals who are pregnant and within 12 weeks post-conception, who are of childbearing potential and planning to become pregnant, or who are of childbearing potential, sexually active, and not using effective contraception.
- The most common adverse reactions of Dovato®, reported in at least 2% of individuals, were headache, diarrhea, nausea, insomnia and fatigue.
- Dovato® may interact with other medications (including rifampin, phenytoin, carbamazepine, antacids, calcium and iron supplements). Seek guidance from an HIV pharmacist or clinician for management.

Additional discussion regarding the use of 2-drug ART in treatment naïve and experienced adults can be found in the June 2020 update of the BC-CfE Therapeutic Guidelines for ARV Treatment of Adult HIV Infection. <http://cfenet.ubc.ca/therapeutic-guidelines/guidelines-antiretroviral-arv-treatment-adult-hiv-infection>

**2. Guideline for Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Regimens for Initial Therapy and for Switching ART in Virologically Stable Suppressed Adults (June 2020)**

This document lists *current* BC-CfE regular drug formulary ART regimen options for initial treatment in adults with HIV infection, and for consideration in virologically suppressed individuals with no known resistance mutations or intolerance to specific agents. The list considers the scientific evidence, as well as cost-benefit considerations, including preference for generic product equivalents where available.

<http://cfenet.ubc.ca/drug-treatment-program/drug-treatment-program-communications>

A complete list of medications available through the BC-CfE Drug Treatment Program can be found at <http://www.cfenet.ubc.ca/publications/centre-documents/hivaids-drugs-available-through-bc-cfe>

Additional BC-CfE Drug Treatment Program Information and Prescription Request Forms can be found at <http://www.cfenet.ubc.ca/drug-treatment-program>.

**3. Resumption of routine HIV plasma viral load testing for HIV treatment**

Providers may resume routine HIV plasma viral load testing for clients on antiretroviral therapy (ART) for the treatment of HIV infection. In the early months of the pandemic, decreased frequency and deferral of HIV viral load testing in stable patients on ART allowed the virology laboratory to focus their resources on COVID-19 testing. However, this is no longer required and normal viral load testing frequency as recommended in treatment monitoring guidelines, and as per clinical judgement, may resume. Elective ART regimen changes may now also be considered, due to the availability of viral load testing for enhanced monitoring after treatment change or initiation.

**4. Updates to BC-CfE Guidance Documents**


Updated versions of the following BC-CfE Guidelines, and other reference documents, can be found at <http://cfenet.ubc.ca/therapeutic-guidelines>.

- Therapeutic Guidelines for ARV Treatment of Adult HIV Infection (June 2020)
- Guidance for the Use of Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for the Prevention of HIV in British Columbia (March 2020)
- Guidance for the Use of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis for the Prevention of HIV Acquisition in British Columbia (June 2020)

Sincerely,



Val Montessori, MD, FRCPC  
Co-Chair, Committee for Drug Evaluation and Therapy  
BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS



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