

# Candesartan cilexetil

**Product:**

CANDESARTAN CILEXETIL (Atacand®)  
32mg tablets

**Class of drugs:**

Angiotensin II receptor blocker

**Indication:**

Treatment of hypertension (high blood pressure)

**Manufacturer:**

AstraZeneca

## CED Recommendation

The CED recommended that candesartan cilexetil (Atacand) 32mg tablet be listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary as a General Benefit, on the basis that this new tablet strength provides additional flexibility in dosing and is available at the same per tablet price as the existing Atacand 8mg and 16mg tablets.

## Executive Officer Decision

Based on the CED's recommendation, the Executive Officer decided to list candesartan cilexetil (Atacand) 32mg tablet on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary as a General Benefit.

## Status

Funding available through Ontario Public Drug Programs.

## Highlights of Recommendation:

- ◆ Candesartan cilexetil (Atacand) 32mg tablet is a new dosage strength added to the current product line.
- ◆ Three other strengths of candesartan cilexetil - 4mg tablet, 8mg tablet, and 16mg tablet - are already listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary as General Benefits.
- ◆ The per tablet cost of candesartan cilexetil 32mg tablet is the same as that for 16mg tablet. Thus, the cost of two 16mg tablets is two times the cost of one 32mg tablet.
- ◆ Overall, the Committee acknowledged the clinical benefit of candesartan cilexetil 32mg and there is a cost savings for patients who require 32mg daily.

## Background:

High blood pressure (hypertension) affects one in five Canadians. Untreated, high blood pressure can lead to heart attack, stroke and kidney failure. Risk factors include excess weight, lack of exercise, unhealthy diet, stress, and excessive alcohol consumption. Modifying these risk factors is the first approach in managing high blood pressure. Medications are required to manage patients who have high blood pressure despite lifestyle changes.

There are several types of medication used to treat high blood pressure. These include diuretics, beta-blockers, angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, angiotensin II receptor blockers, calcium channel blockers, alpha-blockers, vasodilators, and central-acting agents. The standard approach is to prescribe one drug at a time. A second drug is usually added only if the first drug was not effective or the patient experienced side effects at higher doses of the first drug.

Candesartan cilexetil is an angiotensin II receptor blocker.

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### Detailed Discussion:

- ◆ The Committee considered evidence from eight short, randomized, double-blinded, multi-centre clinical trials that demonstrated the efficacy of candesartan cilexetil 32mg for the treatment of hypertension. At eight weeks, candesartan cilexetil 32mg a day reduced mean systolic blood pressure by 6.4 to 15.6 mm Hg and 5.1 to 10mm Hg, respectively.
- ◆ In addition, two open-labelled multicentre clinical studies found that candesartan cilexetil 32mg produced a mean reduction in systolic and diastolic pressure ranging from 18.7 to 20.5 mm Hg and 13.1 to 13.2mm Hg, respectively.
- ◆ The efficacy of candesartan cilexetil 32mg for the treatment of congestive heart failure (CHF) was also demonstrated in a series of multicentre, double-blinded, randomized, active controlled trials. Compared to placebo, candesartan cilexetil 32mg was associated with an 18 percent relative risk reduction in cardiovascular deaths or hospitalization due to heart failure.
- ◆ Candesartan cilexetil 32mg is the targeted dose for patients with CHF.
- ◆ The safety of candesartan cilexetil 32mg daily has been well established in clinical trials and post-marketing experiences.
- ◆ Candesartan cilexetil 32mg tablets are priced at parity with candesartan cilexetil 16mg tablets. This would generate a potential cost savings to the Ministry in patients who require the 32mg dose. Currently, patients have to take two 16mg tablets which is two times the cost of one 32mg tablet.
- ◆ **Overall, the Committee acknowledged the clinical benefit of candesartan cilexetil 32mg tablets.** Other strengths of candesartan cilexetil are listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary as General Benefits. In addition, listing this product may result in potential savings for the Ministry.

### CEDAC Recommendation:

(<http://www.cadth.ca/index.php/en/cdr/recommendations>)

The Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC) did not review this product.



Ministry of  
**Health and Long-Term Care**  
Ontario Public Drug Programs

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