MAVENCLAD (Cladribine)

Patient Guide

Version 2.1, [25 September 2023]

Important information for patients starting therapy with MAVENCLAD

Content

Introduction to MAVENCLAD

How is treatment with MAVENCLAD given?

Side effects and potential risks

- Lymphopenia
- Liver problems
- Herpes zoster (shingles)
- Severe infections including tuberculosis
- Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy
- Malignancies

Prevention of pregnancy during treatment with MAVENCLAD

- Female patients
- Male patients

Reporting of Adverse Events

Introduction to MAVENCLAD

Your doctor has prescribed a medicine for your treatment of multiple sclerosis called MAVENCLAD. This guide is especially for you and includes important information about MAVENCLAD.

By carefully reading this guide, you will learn more about MAVENCLAD and some of its possible side effects.

A step-by-step guide at the end of the package leaflet describes how you should handle MAVENCLAD.

How is treatment with MAVENCLAD given?

The number of MAVENCLAD tablets that you need to take depends on your body weight. Your doctor will give you clear instructions about the number of tablets and when you should take them.

Side effects and potential risks

MAVENCLAD can be associated with side effects and these are fully described in the Package Leaflet you will receive with your tablets. The following describes important side effects about which you should be aware.

Lymphopenia

MAVENCLAD causes a temporary decrease of white blood cells called lymph cells circulating in the blood. Since lymph cells are a part of the body's immune system (the body's natural defences), a large decrease of the circulating lymph cells, called lymphopenia, may render the body susceptible to infections. The most important infections are described below. Your doctor will check your blood to ensure that the numbers of lymph cells do not fall too low.

Liver problems

MAVENCLAD may be associated with liver problems, especially if you have had liver problems in the past. Inform your doctor if you have had liver problems when taking other drugs or if you have any underlying liver disorders. Your doctor will check your blood to ensure that your liver works properly prior to treatment. Symptoms of liver injury can include:

- feeling sick (nausea)
- vomiting, stomach pain
- tiredness (fatigue)
- loss of appetite
- yellow skin or eyes (jaundice)

- dark urine.

If you notice any of the signs or symptoms described above, contact your physician immediately. Your doctor will decide whether your treatment with MAVENCLAD needs interruption or if you must not receive further MAVENCLAD.

Herpes zoster (shingles)

Varicella zoster is a virus that causes chickenpox. It can lay dormant in nerves in the body and can reactivate to cause shingles.

Shingles can affect any part of your body, including your face and eyes, although the chest and abdomen (tummy) are the most common areas where shingles develops.

In some cases, shingles may cause some early symptoms that develop a few days before the painful shingles rash first appears. These early symptoms can include:

- headache
- burning, tingling, numbness or itchiness of the skin in the affected area
- feeling of being generally unwell
- fever.

Most people with shingles experience a localized "band" of severe pain and blistered rash in the affected area. The affected area of skin will usually be tender.

The shingles rash usually appears on one side of your body and develops on the area of skin related to the affected nerve. Initially, the shingles rash appears as red blotches on your skin before developing into itchy blisters. New blisters may appear for up to a week, but a few days after appearing they become yellowish in colour, flatten and dry out.

If you notice any of the signs or symptoms described above, you should contact your physician immediately. Your doctor can prescribe medicine to treat the infection and early treatment can lead to a less severe or shorter course of the shingles.

Severe infections including tuberculosis

MAVENCLAD can temporarily reduce lymph cells in your blood. Inactive infections, including tuberculosis, may be activated when the lymph cell count is strongly decreased. In rare cases, infections may occur that are only seen in persons with severely weakened immune system, called opportunistic infections. Your doctor will check your blood to ensure that the numbers of cells in the blood, which fight infections, do not fall too low.

In addition, you will need to be vigilant of any signs or symptoms that may relate to an infection.

The signs of infections can include:

- fever

- aching, painful muscles
- headache
- generally feeling unwell
- yellowing of the eyes

These may be accompanied by other symptoms specific to the site of the infection such as a cough, vomiting, or painful urination.

If you have particularly severe symptoms, you should see your doctor who can decide if you need any special treatment.

Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML)

PML is a rare brain infection caused by a virus (JC virus) that can occur in patients who take medicines which reduce the activity of the immune system. PML is a serious condition which may result in severe disability or death. Though no cases of PML have been observed in multiple sclerosis patients who took MAVENCLAD, it cannot be excluded that such cases may occur in the future.

Symptoms of PML may be similar to those of a multiple sclerosis attack. Symptoms might include changes in mood or behaviour, memory lapses, speech and communication difficulties. If you believe your disease is getting worse or if you notice any new or unusual symptoms, consult your treating physician as soon as possible.

Malignancies

Because of the way MAVENCLAD works, a potential risk of cancer cannot be excluded. Single events of cancer have been observed in patients who had received cladribine in clinical studies. You should undergo standard cancer screening after taking MAVENCLAD. Your doctor can advise you about cancer screening programs you might consider to use. If you currently have a malignant disease, you must not take MAVENCLAD.

Prevention of pregnancy during treatment with MAVENCLAD

MAVENCLAD can cause damage to genetic material and experience in animal studies showed that MAVENCLAD caused death and deformations to the developing foetus. Therefore, if MAVENCLAD is taken 6 months prior to a pregnancy or during pregnancy, it may cause miscarriage or birth defects in babies. Your doctor may counsel you about the avoidance of pregnancy before prescribing MAVENCLAD.

Female Patients

Use of MAVENCLAD is prohibited in pregnant women because of the risk of serious harm to the unborn baby. Pregnancy must be excluded before start of therapy with MAVENCLAD. You must not start MAVENCLAD treatment if you are pregnant. Women who can get pregnant must take precautions to avoid pregnancy during the time that you are taking the MAVENCLAD and for at

least 6 months after your last drug intake in each treatment year by using an effective contraceptive method (i.e. a method with a failure rate of less than 1% per year when used consistently and correctly). Your doctor will provide guidance on appropriate contraceptive methods.

MAVENCLAD does not decrease the effectiveness of oral contraceptives used to avoid pregnancy (the “pill”).

If you become pregnant, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible to discuss and get advice about any potential risks with the pregnancy.

Male Patients

MAVENCLAD can be harmful to your semen and can be transferred to your female partner via your semen. Thus, it could cause harm to the unborn baby. You must take precautions to avoid your partner becoming pregnant, whilst you are taking the drug and for at least 6 months after your last drug intake in each treatment year, by using an effective contraceptive method (i.e. a method with a failure rate of less than 1% per year when used consistently and correctly). Your doctor will provide guidance on appropriate contraceptives methods.

If your partner becomes pregnant, she should contact the doctor as soon as possible to discuss any potential risks with the pregnancy.

Reporting of Adverse Events

Suspected Adverse Drug Reactions (side effects) or medication errors may be reported by HCP/Patients who can either report ADRs to the Medicines Authority or to the MAH.

HCP/Patients reporting side effects to the Medicines Authority, may use the ADR reporting form, which is available online at http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal, and sent by post or email to:

Post: Pharmacovigilance Section at Post-Licensing Directorate, Medicines Authority, Sir Temi Żammit Buildings, Malta Life Sciences Park, San Ġwann SĠN 3000
Email: postlicensing.medicinesauthority@gov.mt

Adverse events reported to the MAH shall be reported through the Merck representative office in Malta:
Vivian Corporation Ltd
The Hub,
Troubridge Street,
Marsa MRS 1113
Tel: +35622588600

Email: pv@viviancorp.com

The RMMs are a condition of the marketing authorization.

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