NHS
Cheshire and Merseyside

Liraglutide for managing overweight and obesity (NICE TA664)

RED - specialist prescribing

Recommendations

The Cheshire and Merseyside Area Prescribing Group recommend the prescribing of liraglutide, by specialists only, for managing overweight and obesity within a Tier 3 secondary care weight management service, in accordance with NICE technology appraisal (TA) 664.

Liraglutide is recommended as an option for managing overweight and obesity alongside a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity in adults, only if:

- they have a body mass index (BMI) of at least 35 kg/m^2 (or at least 32.5 kg/m^2 for members of minority ethnic groups known to be at equivalent risk of the consequences of obesity at a lower BMI than the white population) **and**
- they have non-diabetic hyperglycaemia (defined as a haemoglobin A1c level of 42 mmol/mol to 47 mmol/mol [6.0 to 6.4%] or a fasting plasma glucose level of 5.5 mmol/litre to 6.9 mmol/litre) **and**
- they have a high risk of cardiovascular disease based on risk factors such as hypertension and dyslipidaemia **and**
- it is prescribed in secondary care by a specialist multidisciplinary tier 3 weight management service **and**
- the company provides it according to the commercial arrangement [1] where in place.

NICE TA 664 should be used alongside NICE Public heath guideline [PH38] Type 2 diabetes: prevention in people at high risk [1].

Prescribing information

Prescribers should inform patients about the common and serious side effects associated with glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1RAs) [3]. Refer to MHRA Drug Safety Update .

The liraglutide products which are licensed for weight management are not interchangeable with other liraglutide products which are only licensed for the management of diabetes. Prescribers should ensure that the correct liraglutide product is prescribed by brand and in accordance with its licensed indication.

The starting dose of liraglutide is 0.6 mg once daily. Daily doses higher than 3.0 mg are not recommended [2]. Refer to product SPC for dosage schedule.

Implementation notes [1]

Liraglutide can only be prescribed for weight management in secondary care by a specialist multidisciplinary tier 3 weight management service.

Safety [2]

Patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus receiving liraglutide in combination with insulin and/or sulfonylurea may have an increased risk of hypoglycaemia. The risk of hypoglycaemia may be lowered by a reduction in the dose of insulin and/or sulfonylurea.

The following adverse reactions have been reported in people treated with liraglutide:

Very common (≥ 1/10): headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation.

Common (≥ 1/100 to < 1/10): hypoglycaemia, insomnia, dizziness, dysgeusia, dry mouth, dyspepsia, gastritis, gastro-oesophageal reflux disease, upper abdominal pain, flatulence, belching, abdominal distension, cholelithiasis, rash, injection site reactions, asthenia and fatigue.

Refer to product SPC for full safety information.

Cost

Liraglutide is an option within the costs of injectable therapies for weight management.

The least expensive option of the liraglutide products licensed for weight management should be used, taking account of price per dose and any commercial arrangements.

References

1. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Technology Appraisal 664; Liraglutide for managing overweight and obesity; 09 December 2020. Accessed 26 September 2024.
2. Novo Nordisk Limited. Summary of Product Characteristics, Saxenda 6 mg/mL solution for injection in pre-filled pen, October 2024. Accessed 28 January 2025.
3. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Drug Safety Update; GLP-1 receptor agonists: reminder of the potential side effects and to be aware of the potential for misuse, 24 October 2024. Accessed 30 December 2024.