Bevacizumab for advanced colorectal cancer

Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment

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Authors' objectives
To summarize the available information on the use of bevacizumab for advanced colorectal cancer.

Authors' conclusions
Bevacizumab is a recombinant humanized monoclonal antibody that targets vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF). It is thought that bevacizumab inhibits the formation of new blood vessels.

Two clinical trials show that the addition of bevacizumab to a regimen of either fluorouracil plus leucovorin (FL) or FL combined with irinotecan (IFL), significantly improves response rate and time to tumour progression and increases overall survival for patients with advanced colorectal cancer (ACC).

Thromboembolic events are the most clinically significant adverse events, but hypertension, hemorrhage and gastrointestinal perforation are other potential safety concerns.

More studies are needed to compare the combination of bevacizumab plus IFL to other chemotherapy regimens used in the treatment of ACC.

The addition of bevacizumab to 5-fluorouracil-based chemotherapy regimens will significantly increase the costs of palliation for ACC.

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