

## Bortezomib, Lenalidomide and Dexamethasone (RVD-Lite) Induction Therapy

### INDICATIONS FOR USE:

INDICATION	ICD10	Regimen Code	Reimbursement Status
Treatment of newly diagnosed multiple myeloma patients who are transplant ineligible	C90	00780a	Bortezomib: Hospital

### TREATMENT:

*The starting dose of the drugs detailed below may be adjusted downward by the prescribing clinician, using their independent medical judgement, to consider each patients individual clinical circumstances.*

Bortezomib is administered once weekly on days 1, 8, 15 and 22; dexamethasone on days 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16 and 22 and 23; and lenalidomide on days 1-21 of a 35 day treatment cycle for up to nine cycles or until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity occurs. This is the induction phase.

The induction phase is followed by six cycles of consolidation therapy (**Please refer to NCCP Regimen 00781 Bortezomib and Lenalidomide RVD-Lite Consolidation Therapy**).

Lenalidomide only may be continued as maintenance therapy, at the discretion of the prescribing consultant (**Please refer to NCCP Regimen 00782 Lenalidomide RVD-Lite Maintenance Therapy**).

Day	Drug	Dose	Route	Cycle
1, 8, 15 and 22	Bortezomib <sup>a</sup>	1.3mg/m <sup>2</sup>	SC <sup>b, c</sup> (abdomen or thigh)	Every 35 days for up to 9 cycles
1-21 inclusive	Lenalidomide	15mg	PO <sup>d</sup>	Every 35 days for up to 9 cycles
1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23	Dexamethasone <sup>e</sup>	20mg	PO <sup>f</sup>	Every 35 days for up to 9 cycles

<sup>a</sup> Bortezomib is a proteasome inhibitor and is neurotoxic. Refer to **NCCP Guidance on the Safe Use of Neurotoxic drugs (including Vinca Alkaloids) in the treatment of cancer** [Here](#).

<sup>b</sup> In individual cases where approved by Consultant bortezomib may be administered as IV bolus over 3-5 seconds through a peripheral or central intravenous catheter followed by a flush with 0.9% NaCl. Note the concentration of bortezomib solution should be 1mg/ml when administered via the IV route.

<sup>c</sup> The solution should be injected subcutaneously, at a 45-90° angle. Injection sites should be rotated for successive injections. If local injection site reactions occur, either a less concentrated solution may be administered SC or a switch to IV injection is recommended.

At least 72 hours should elapse between consecutive doses of bortezomib.

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<sup>d</sup> Lenalidomide capsules should be taken at about the same time each day, in the evening may be preferred due to risk of drowsiness.  
 The capsules should not be opened, broken or chewed. **The capsules should be swallowed whole, preferably with water, either with or without food.**  
 If less than 12 hours has elapsed since missing a dose of lenalidomide, the patient can take the dose.  
 If more than 12 hours has elapsed since missing a dose at the normal time, the patient should not take the dose, but take the next dose at the normal time on the following day.

<sup>e</sup> Patients >75 years to take dexamethasone on days 1, 8, 15 and 22 only.

<sup>f</sup> Dexamethasone to be taken once daily in the morning with food.

**ELIGIBILITY:**

- Indications as above
- ECOG 0-2; ECOG>2, at consultant discretion
- Patients with pre-existing severe neuropathy should be treated with bortezomib only after careful risk/benefit assessment

**EXCLUSIONS:**

- Hypersensitivity to bortezomib, boron, lenalidomide, dexamethasone or any of the excipients
- Pregnancy
- Patients who are unable to comply with the Lenalidomide Pregnancy Prevention Programme
- Grade ≥2 peripheral neuropathy
- ANC < 1 x 10<sup>9</sup> cells/L; for ANC < 1 x 10<sup>9</sup> cells/L, therapy at consultant discretion, if neutropenia deemed to be related to bone marrow infiltrate by disease

**PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY:**

The treatment plan must be initiated by a Consultant Haematologist working in the area of haematological malignancies.

**TESTS:**

**Baseline tests:**

- FBC, renal, liver and bone profile
- Blood pressure, blood glucose (patients on oral hypoglycaemics)
- Assessment of peripheral neuropathy status
- VTE risk assessment
- Urine pregnancy testing or serum hCG test for women of childbearing potential as per Pregnancy Prevention Programme
- Assessment and registration as per Pregnancy Prevention Program for both male and female patients
- Virology screen - Hepatitis B (HBsAg, HBcoreAb), Hepatitis C and HIV **\*See Adverse Effects/Regimen Specific Complications re Hepatitis B Reactivation**

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**Regular tests:**

- FBC; monitor platelet count at a minimum of day 1 and day 8 each cycle
- Liver, renal, bone profile
- Blood pressure
- Urine pregnancy testing or serum hCG test every 28 days for women of childbearing potential as per Pregnancy Prevention Programme
- Consider monitoring thyroid function tests
- Blood glucose\* if being treated with oral hypoglycaemics (**\*See Drug Interactions**)

**Disease monitoring:**

Disease monitoring should be in line with the patient’s treatment plan and any other test(s) as directed by the supervising Consultant.

**DOSE MODIFICATIONS:**

- Any dose modification should be discussed with a Consultant.
- Lenalidomide treatment must not be started if the ANC is  $< 1.0 \times 10^9/L$  and/or platelets  $< 75 \times 10^9/L$  or, dependent on bone marrow infiltration by plasma cells, platelet counts  $< 30 \times 10^9/L$ .
- Bortezomib therapy should be withheld when the platelet count is  $< 25 \times 10^9/L$ .
- Dose level reductions for bortezomib and lenalidomide are described in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Dose reduction steps for lenalidomide and bortezomib**

Dose Level	Lenalidomide	Bortezomib
Starting dose	15mg	1.3mg/m <sup>2</sup>
Dose level -1	10mg	1.0mg/m <sup>2</sup>
Dose level -2	5mg	0.7mg/m <sup>2</sup>
Dose level -3	Discontinue	Discontinue

**Haematological:**

**Table 2: Dose Modifications for Thrombocytopenia**

Platelets	Lenalidomide	Platelets	Bortezomib
First Fall to $< 30 \times 10^9/L$	Interrupt lenalidomide therapy	$\geq 25 \times 10^9/L$	Maintain full dose
Return to $\geq 30 \times 10^9/L$	Resume lenalidomide at dose level -1		

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For each subsequent drop to $< 30 \times 10^9/L$	Interrupt lenalidomide therapy	$< 25 \times 10^9/L$	Withhold treatment until symptoms of the toxicity have resolved. Treatment may be reinitiated at the next lower dose level. If the toxicity is not resolved or if it recurs at the lowest dose, discontinuation of bortezomib must be considered unless the benefit of treatment clearly outweighs the risk.
Return to $\geq 30 \times 10^9/L$	Resume lenalidomide at next lower dose level once daily. Do not dose below 5mg once daily		

**Table 3: Dose Modifications for neutropenia**

ANC	Lenalidomide	ANC	Bortezomib
First fall to $< 0.5 \times 10^9/L$  Return to $\geq 0.5 \times 10^9/L$ (where no other haematological toxicity is observed)	Interrupt lenalidomide therapy; Resume lenalidomide at starting dose once daily	$\geq 0.5 \times 10^9/L$	Maintain full dose
Return to $\geq 0.5 \times 10^9/L$ (where other haematological toxicity is observed)	Resume lenalidomide at dose level -1		
For each subsequent drop to $< 0.5 \times 10^9/L$	Interrupt lenalidomide therapy	$< 0.5 \times 10^9/L$	Withhold treatment until symptoms of the toxicity have resolved. Treatment may be reinitiated at the next lower dose level. If the toxicity is not resolved or if it recurs at the lowest dose, discontinuation of bortezomib must be considered unless the benefit of treatment clearly outweighs the risk.
Return to $\geq 0.5 \times 10^9/L$	Resume lenalidomide at next lower dose level once daily. Do not dose below 5mg once daily		
In the case of neutropenia, the use of growth factors in patient management should be considered.			
If the dose of lenalidomide was reduced for a haematological dose limiting toxicity (DLT), the dose of lenalidomide may be re-introduced to the next higher dose level (up to the starting dose) at the discretion of the treating consultant if continued lenalidomide/dexamethasone therapy resulted in improved bone marrow function (no DLT for at least 2 consecutive cycles and an ANC $> 1.5 \times 10^9/L$ with a platelet count $> 100 \times 10^9/L$ at the beginning of a new cycle at the current dose level).			

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**Renal and Hepatic Impairment:**

**Table 4: Dose modification of Bortezomib and Lenalidomide in Renal or hepatic Impairment**

Drug	Renal impairment		Hepatic impairment			
	CrCl ml/min	Dose modification	Grade of Hepatic Impairment*	Bilirubin Level**	(AST) Levels**	Modification of starting dose
Bortezomib	It is unknown if the pharmacokinetics of bortezomib are influenced in patients with severe renal impairment not undergoing dialysis (CrCL < 20ml/min). Since dialysis may reduce bortezomib concentrations, it should be administered after the dialysis procedure.		Mild	≤1 x ULN	> ULN	None
				>1-1.5xULN	Any	None
			Moderate	>1.5-3xULN	Any	Reduce dose to 0.7mg/m <sup>2</sup> in the first treatment cycle. Consider dose escalation to 1mg/m <sup>2</sup> or further dose reduction to 0.5mg/m <sup>2</sup> in subsequent cycles based on patient tolerability.
			Severe	>3xULN	Any	
Lenalidomide			Lenalidomide has not formally been studied in patients with impaired hepatic function and there are no specific dose recommendations.			
	30 to 50	Reduce dose to 10mg once daily <sup>a</sup>				
	< 30 not requiring dialysis	15mg every other day				
	< 30 requiring dialysis	5mg once daily. On dialysis days the dose should be administered following dialysis.				
	<sup>a</sup> The dose may be escalated to 15mg once daily after 2 cycles if patient is not responding to treatment and is tolerating the treatment					

\*Based on NCI Organ Dysfunction Working Group classification for categorising hepatic impairment (mild, moderate, severe)

\*\*ULN = Upper Limit Normal

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**Neuropathic pain and/or peripheral neuropathy:**

**Table 5: Dose modifications for Bortezomib Related Neuropathy**

Severity of neuropathy	Dose Modification
Grade 1	None
Grade 1 with pain or Grade 2	Reduce dose to 1 mg/m <sup>2</sup>
Grade 2 with pain or Grade 3	Withhold treatment until symptoms of toxicity have resolved. When toxicity resolves re-initiate treatment and reduce dose to 0.7mg/m <sup>2</sup> once every week
Grade 4 and/or severe autonomic neuropathy	Discontinue treatment
Grade 1: Asymptomatic; clinical or diagnostic observations only Grade 2: Moderate symptoms; limiting instrumental Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Grade 3: Severe symptoms; limiting self-care ADL Grade 4: Life-threatening consequences; urgent intervention indicated Grading based on NCI Common Toxicity Criteria CTCAE v 4	

**Dose reductions for other toxicities:**

**Table 6: Dose Modification of Bortezomib and Lenalidomide for Adverse Events**

Drug	Adverse reactions*	Recommended dose modification
Bortezomib	Grade 3 Non-haematological toxicity	Withhold treatment until symptoms of the toxicity have resolved. Treatment may be reinitiated at the next lower dose level. If the toxicity is not resolved or if it recurs at the lowest dose, discontinuation of bortezomib must be considered unless the benefit of treatment clearly outweighs the risk.
	New or worsening pulmonary symptoms (e.g. cough, dyspnoea)	Withhold treatment. Prompt diagnostic evaluation required and benefit/risk ratio should be considered prior to continuing bortezomib therapy.
	Posterior Reversible Encephalopathy Syndrome (PRES)	Discontinue treatment.
Lenalidomide	Thromboembolic event	Withhold treatment and start standard anticoagulant therapy. Once stabilised on the anticoagulant therapy and complications of thromboembolic event have been managed, lenalidomide treatment may be restarted at the original dose dependant on a benefit/risk assessment. Anticoagulant therapy should be continued during the course of lenalidomide treatment.
	Skin rash	Withhold treatment and evaluate clinically. If allergic reaction do not resume treatment.
	Angioedema	Discontinue treatment.

\*Grading based on NCI Common Toxicity Criteria CTCAE v 4.0

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**SUPPORTIVE CARE:**

**EMETOGENIC POTENTIAL:**

**Bortezomib:** Low (Refer to local policy).

**Lenalidomide:** Minimal to Low (Refer to local policy).

**PREMEDICATIONS:** Not usually required. Ensure patient remains well hydrated during treatment.

**OTHER SUPPORTIVE CARE:**

- In case of neutropenia the consultant may consider the use of growth factors in patient management
- Thromboprophylaxis (Refer to local policy)
- Prophylactic laxatives to prevent lenalidomide induced constipation (Refer to local policy)
- Bisphosphonates should be considered in all patients with myeloma related bone disease
- H<sub>2</sub>-antagonist or PPI in patients receiving dexamethasone therapy (Refer to local policy)
- Consider PJP prophylaxis (Refer to local policy)
- Tumour Lysis Syndrome prophylaxis (Refer to local policy)
- Low dose antiviral prophylaxis (Refer to local policy)

**ADVERSE EFFECTS / REGIMEN SPECIFIC COMPLICATIONS:**

*The adverse effects listed are not exhaustive. Please refer to the relevant Summary of Product Characteristics for full details.*

- **Tumour Lysis Syndrome:** Patients at risk of tumour lysis syndrome are those with high tumour burden prior to treatment. These patients should be monitored closely and appropriate precautions taken.
- **Hepatitis B Reactivation:** Patients should be tested for both HBsAg and HBcoreAb as per local policy. If either test is positive, such patients should be treated with anti-viral therapy. (Refer to local infectious disease policy). These patients should be considered for assessment by hepatology.

**Bortezomib**

- **Haematological toxicity:** Gastrointestinal and intracerebral haemorrhage have been reported in association with bortezomib treatment. Therefore platelet counts should be monitored prior to each dose of bortezomib and bortezomib should be withheld when the platelet count is <25 x 10<sup>9</sup>/L. Potential benefit of treatment should be carefully weighed against the risks, particularly in case of moderate to severe thrombocytopenia and risk factors for bleeding. Complete blood counts with differential and including platelet counts should be frequently monitored throughout treatment with bortezomib. Platelet transfusion should be considered when clinically appropriate.
- **Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML):** Patients should be monitored at regular intervals for any new or worsening neurological symptoms or signs that may be suggestive of PML as part of the differential diagnosis of CNS problems. If a diagnosis of PML is suspected patients should be referred to a specialist in PML and appropriate diagnostic measures for PML should be initiated. Discontinue bortezomib if PML is diagnosed.
- **Peripheral Neuropathy:** Patients with pre-existing severe neuropathy may be treated with bortezomib only after careful risk/benefit assessment.

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- **Seizures:** Seizures have been uncommonly reported in patients without previous history of seizures or epilepsy. Special care is required when treating patients with any risk factors for seizures.
- **Hypotension:** Treatment is commonly associated with orthostatic/postural hypotension. A minority of patients with orthostatic hypotension experienced syncopal events. Caution is advised when treating patients with a history of syncope receiving medicinal products known to be associated with hypotension; or who are dehydrated due to recurrent diarrhoea or vomiting.
- **Gastrointestinal toxicity:** Gastrointestinal toxicity, including nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting and constipation are very common with bortezomib treatment.
- **Posterior Reversible Encephalopathy Syndrome (PRES):** In patients developing PRES, treatment with bortezomib should be discontinued.
- **Heart Failure:** Acute development or exacerbation of congestive heart failure, and/or new onset of decreased left ventricular ejection fraction has been reported during bortezomib treatment. Patients with risk factors for or existing heart disease should be closely monitored.
- **Hepatic Impairment:** Bortezomib is metabolised by liver enzymes. Bortezomib exposure is increased in patients with moderate or severe hepatic impairment; these patients should be treated with bortezomib at reduced doses and closely monitored for toxicities.
- **Seizures:** Seizures have been uncommonly reported in patients without previous history of seizures or epilepsy. Special care is required when treating patients with any risk factors for seizures.
- **Heart Failure:** Acute development or exacerbation of congestive heart failure, and/or new onset of decreased left ventricular ejection fraction has been reported during bortezomib treatment. Patients with risk factors for or existing heart disease should be closely monitored.
- **Renal Impairment:** Patients with renal impairment should be monitored closely.

## Lenalidomide

- **Teratogenic effects:** Lenalidomide is structurally related to thalidomide a powerful human teratogen. Lenalidomide must never be used by women who are pregnant or by women who could become pregnant unless all the conditions of the Lenalidomide Pregnancy Prevention Programme are met. These conditions must be fulfilled for all male and female patients.
- **Skin reactions:** Lenalidomide must be discontinued permanently for exfoliative or bullous rash or if Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS) or toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN) is suspected.
- **Cardiovascular:** Patients with known risk factors for MI, including prior thrombosis should be closely monitored and action should be taken to try to minimise all modifiable risk factors (e.g. smoking, hypertension and hyperlipidaemia). There is an increased risk of venous and arterial thromboembolism in patients treated with lenalidomide and dexamethasone. Previous history of thromboembolic events or concomitant administration of erythropoietic agents or other agents such as hormone replacement therapy, may also increase thromboembolic risk in these patients. Particularly, a haemoglobin concentration above 12g/dl should lead to discontinuation of erythropoietic agents. Thromboprophylaxis should be considered especially in patients with additional thrombotic risk factors.
- **Peripheral Neuropathy:** Lenalidomide is structurally related to thalidomide which is known to induce severe peripheral neuropathy. The neurotoxic potential of lenalidomide associated with long-term use cannot be ruled out.
- **Thyroid function:** Cases of hypothyroidism have been reported and baseline and ongoing monitoring of thyroid function is recommended.

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**DRUG INTERACTIONS:**

- Additive hypotensive effect with anti-hypertensives and bortezomib. Blood pressure should be monitored and ensure patient is well hydrated prior to bortezomib dose. Adjustment of anti-hypertensives may be required.
- During clinical trials, hypoglycemia was uncommonly reported and hyperglycemia commonly reported in diabetic patients receiving oral hypoglycemics. Patients on oral anti-diabetic agents receiving bortezomib treatment may require close monitoring of their blood glucose levels and adjustment of the dose of their anti-diabetics.
- Patients should be closely monitored when given bortezomib in combination with potent CYP3A4-inhibitors. Caution should be exercised when bortezomib is combined with CYP3A4- or CYP2C19-substrates.
- Erythropoietic agents, or other agents that may increase the risk of thrombosis, such as hormone replacement therapy, should be used with caution in multiple myeloma patients receiving lenalidomide with dexamethasone.
- There is an increased risk of rhabdomyolysis when statins are administered with lenalidomide, which may be simply additive. Enhanced clinical and laboratory monitoring is warranted notably during the first weeks of treatment.
- Current drug interaction databases should be consulted for more information.

**COMPANY SUPPORT RESOURCES/Useful Links:**

**Lenalidomide**

- Please refer to the HPRA website ([www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie)) for the individual product for list of relevant support resources
- Prescribers are required to read and understand the relevant HCP Information Guide and to adhere to the PPP

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Version	Date	Amendment	Approved By
1	02/11/2022		NCCP Plasma Cell Disorder Clinical Advisory Group
1a	13/02/2024	Updated company support resources/ useful links section in line with NCCP standardisation.	NCCP

Comments and feedback welcome at [oncologydrugs@cancercontrol.ie](mailto:oncologydrugs@cancercontrol.ie).

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<sup>i</sup> This is an unlicensed indication for the use of Bortezomib® in Ireland. Patient’s should be informed of this and consented to treatment in line with the hospital’s policy on the use of unlicensed medication and unlicensed or “off label” indications. Prescribers should be fully aware of their responsibility in communicating any relevant information to the patient and also ensuring that the unlicensed or “off label” indication has been acknowledged by the hospital’s Drugs and Therapeutics Committee, or equivalent, in line with hospital policy

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