

Teriflunomide (Aubagio®)

Aubagio is the active metabolite of Leflunomide (ARAVA). This once-a-day pill interrupts pyrimidine synthesis and works as a form of mild immunosuppression/immunomodulation.

Efficacy: We reviewed efficacy, safety, and tolerability data from the TEMSO, TOWER and TENERE trials, and long-term follow-up studies with teriflunomide (Aubagio). In the TEMSO trial, 14mg Aubagio (ARR 0.37) decreased relapse rate by 31% compared to placebo (ARR 0.54). In the TENERE trial, no differences in risk of treatment failure (from relapse or other reasons to stop drug) were found between teriflunomide and Rebif. Both drugs had similar relapse rates (teriflunomide ARR 0.26, Rebif ARR 0.22).

NEDA (no evidence of disease activity: no attacks, no 3-month confirmed disability progression, no new/enlarged T2 bright lesions or gad+ lesions on MRI) was achieved in 23% of 14mg teriflunomide treated patients, compared to 14% of placebo patients.

Common side effects of teriflunomide: diarrhea, nausea, transient hair thinning, ALT elevations and changes to blood pressure. Rarely, peripheral neuropathy, serious skin reactions, and kidney problems have been reported.

Lab monitoring: We must check a TB test (PPD or QuantiFERON), pregnancy test, CBC and LFTs before starting Aubagio. Once taking Aubagio, we must check a monthly liver test (ALT) for the 1st 6 months, then we will check liver (LFTs) and blood counts every 3-6 months after that.

We ask that the patient promptly report any new skin rashes. If a new skin rash appears on the face, hands or feet may be serious and we recommend stopping Aubagio and presenting to the ER if this occurs.

We ask the patient to promptly report any symptoms of peripheral neuropathy (new numbness to fingers/toes) while on Aubagio.

Rarely Aubagio can cause elevated blood pressure and we will monitor this at each visit. If elevated, we will ask for assistance from the patient's PCP.

Aubagio can be rapidly eliminated from the body by taking 11 days of activated charcoal or mucomyst thrice daily.

Aubagio and pregnancy: Patients who might consider having children in the next several years may not be the best fit for this drug. It takes up to 18-24 months for the drug to clear your system unless a rapid elimination protocol is used to clear the drug faster. Any patient taking teriflunomide must use proper birth control. All women of childbearing potential must agree to use an effective form of birth control while on Aubagio.