

**IN PRACTICE** Based on the data available in 2025, *ribociclib* is still the first-choice CDK 4/6 inhibitor to use as add-on therapy with an aromatase inhibitor in postmenopausal women with inoperable or metastatic breast cancer.

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## Literature search up to 27 August 2025

1- "Abemaciclib (Verzenios<sup>®</sup>), palbociclib (Ibrance<sup>®</sup>) and ribociclib (Kisqali<sup>®</sup>) added to an aromatase inhibitor in certain breast cancers. As of mid-2023, ribociclib is the most prudent choice of the three to consider with patients" *Prescrire Int* 2023; 43 (479): 654-657. 2- HAS Commission de la Transparence "Avis-Verzenios" 26 March 2025: 30 pages.

## Prescrire's drug ratings in 2025: a brief review

● 2025 saw 3 major therapeutic advances for children, and a few other notable advances. Compared with previous years, just as many drugs offered no advantages over existing treatment options, and slightly more drugs were more dangerous than beneficial. In several cases, new data on previously evaluated drugs changed their harm-benefit balance.

Every year, Prescrire publishes numerous independent, systematic, critical reviews of drugs. Our aim is to help subscribers identify those that advance patient care. We also keep a close eye on re-examinations of the harm-benefit balance of drugs that are already on the market, news on adverse effects, drug shortages, and market withdrawals.

Prescrire rated 119 drugs in 2025 (see the table on p. 102).

**Three major therapeutic advances for children and a few notable advances.** 33 drugs advanced patient care:

- 3 drugs (2.5% of all the drugs evaluated in our French edition in 2025) represented a major therapeutic advance, all of which were advances for children: *Ebola vaccine rVSV-Zebov* (Ervebo<sup>®</sup>) (rated "Bravo"); and 2 drugs authorised for spinal muscular atrophy, *onasemnogene abeparvovec* (Zolgensma<sup>®</sup>) and *nusinersen* (Spinraza<sup>®</sup>) (both rated "A real advance");
- 9 (8%) represented a notable advance (rated "Offers an advantage");
- 21 (18%) represented a modest advance (rated "Possibly helpful").

The proportion of drugs that represented at least a notable advance was similar to that observed in recent years.

**Compared with previous years, a few more drugs were more dangerous than beneficial.** 60 (50%) of the drugs evaluated in 2025

offered no advantages over existing treatment options (rated "Nothing new"). For 4 drugs (3%), it was impossible to determine from the data available whether or not they represented a therapeutic advance (rated "Judgement reserved"). And 22 drugs (18%) were considered more dangerous than beneficial in the clinical situation concerned (rated "Not acceptable"). The proportion of drugs in this category is higher than in previous years (see the figure on p. 102).

**Longer-term data revealed a few therapeutic advances, in particular in the treatment of certain cancers.** New data published in 2025 led us to amend our previous ratings of 9 drugs, in 10 clinical situations. This number is higher than in previous years, indicative of the growing trend to grant marketing authorisation on the basis of immature data. In some cases, the new clinical data showed the drug to represent a therapeutic advance: a major advance in the case of *onasemnogene abeparvovec* (Zolgensma<sup>®</sup>) and *nusinersen* (Spinraza<sup>®</sup>); a notable advance for *cerliponase alfa* (Brineura<sup>®</sup>) in a rare genetic disorder, *pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) in certain breast or renal cancers, and *trastuzumab emtansine* (Kadcyla<sup>®</sup>) in certain breast cancers; and a modest advance in the case of *semaglutide* (Wegovy<sup>®</sup>) in excess body weight. In other cases, we concluded that the drug was not an advance for patients: *abemaciclib* (Verzenios<sup>®</sup>) in certain breast cancers and *tirzepatide*

(Mounjaro<sup>®</sup>) in excess body weight offered no advantages; and *andexanet alfa* (Ondexxya<sup>®</sup>), an antidote to anticoagulants of the direct factor Xa inhibitor (xaban) class, was categorised as a drug to avoid, given that it was not shown to improve clinical outcomes, yet it increases the risk of thromboembolic events.

**Clear advances in infectious diseases/parasitology.** The marketing authorisation for *Ebola vaccine rVSV-Zebov* in children from 1 year of age is a major advance in the prevention of a disease that is very often fatal and has no known cure. And *bedaquiline* (Sirturo<sup>®</sup>) is a notable advance in the treatment of pulmonary multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, both as first-line treatment and in children from 5 years of age. The French market also saw notable advances in the treatment of malaria, with the introduction of a new 110-mg dose strength of *artesunate*, and the authorisation of *primaquine* in the prevention of relapses of malaria due to *Plasmodium vivax* or *Plasmodium ovale*.

**New products containing old substances that are best avoided.** Some of the 22 products rated as more dangerous than beneficial were old substances that had been authorised in a new indication, such as *melatonin* in insomnia in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which is too risky in children treated with a psychostimulant; or *chondroitin* authorised in France in hand osteoarthritis. Other examples are: *tranexamic acid* sachets, a drug that is too risky in menorrhagia and even more so when sold over the counter, as is now the case in France; a new formulation of *ciclosporin* eye drops (Vevizye<sup>®</sup>), which has no demonstrated efficacy and can

## 10 years of drug ratings in La Revue Prescrire

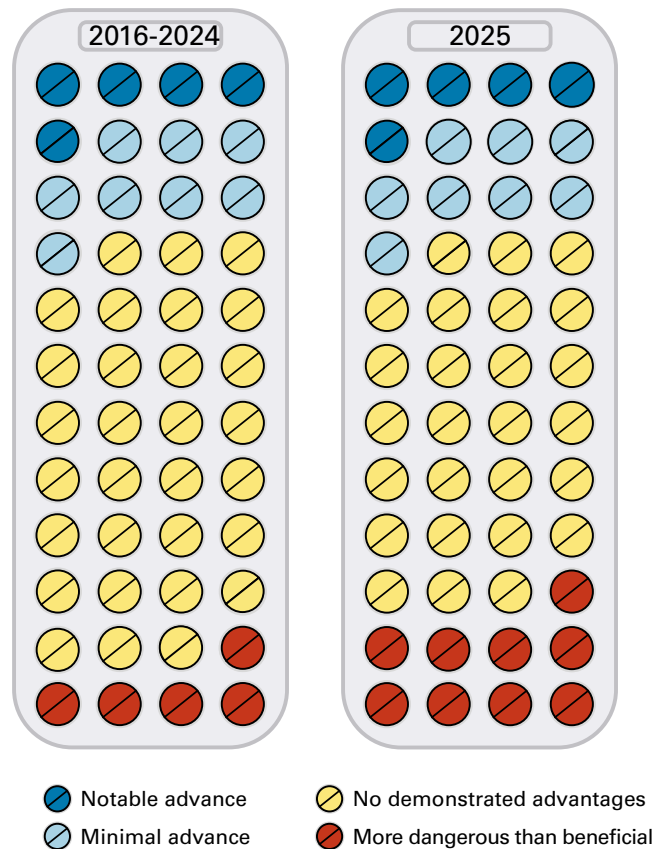
PRESCRIRE'S RATING	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>BRAVO</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
<b>A REAL ADVANCE</b>	1	1	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	2
<b>OFFERS AN ADVANTAGE</b>	5	9	11	10	6	14	11	10	6	9
<b>POSSIBLY HELPFUL</b>	9	18	22	13	18	19	23	20	23	21
<b>NOTHING NEW</b>	56	45	50	61	55	51	63	73	60	60
<b>JUDGEMENT RESERVED</b>	5	4	5	9	17	12	13	10	14	4
<b>NOT ACCEPTABLE</b>	16	15	9	14	10	9	14	8	18	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>119</b>

cause eye pain and adverse effects related to immunosuppression; and topical *finasteride* in androgenetic alopecia, a drug that is too risky in this situation, since its efficacy in increasing hair growth is at best modest and transient. Despite this, in 2025, on completing a review of *finasteride's* harm-benefit balance, Europe's health authorities chose to maintain topical and oral *finasteride* on the European market.

**Market withdrawals: some detrimental to patient care, others long overdue.** In 2025, in France, the supply to community pharmacies of several dose strengths of heparin calcium and heparin sodium was discontinued, depriving certain patients of the most appropriate treatment for their situation, because unfractionated heparins are sometimes a better choice than low molecular weight heparins (LMWH), in particular for patients with severe renal impairment. Other product discontinuations could cause harm. The discontinuation of *itraconazole* oral solution left *fluconazole* as the only azole antifungal available in oral liquid form in community pharmacies. The discontinuation of *quinagolide*, the only dopamine agonist used in hyperprolactinaemia that is not an ergot derivative, is likely to increase the number of patients exposed to the risk of heart valve disorders and fibrosis associated with the use of *cabergoline* or *bromocriptine*.

In contrast, the discontinuation, in France, of products containing the vasoconstrictor *pseudoephedrine*, and that of the mucolytic *bromhexine*, were welcome advances for patient safety, albeit long overdue.

### Proportion of drugs rated in 2025 that advanced patient care, compared with the mean of the previous 9 years



**IN SUMMARY** This review of Prescrire's drug ratings in 2025 is an opportunity to highlight how a drug's harm-benefit balance is not set in stone, but can change over time as new data become available. Sometimes it becomes more favourable, sometimes less, shifting the drug's place in therapy. Prescrire's re-evaluations, in

light of new data, reflect this phenomenon. Monitoring of market withdrawals shows that some drugs that are useful for patients are no longer available, increasing the number of patients exposed to riskier alternatives, and creating a risk of drug shortages.

## BRAVO

- *Ebola vaccine rVSV-Zebov* (Ervebo<sup>®</sup>) in children in an outbreak of Ebola virus disease (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).

## A REAL ADVANCE

- *Nusinersen* (Spinraza<sup>®</sup>) in spinal muscular atrophy (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Onasemnogene abeparvovec* (Zolgensma<sup>®</sup>) in spinal muscular atrophy (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).

## OFFERS AN ADVANTAGE

- *Artesunate* (Artesunate Amivas<sup>®</sup>) 110-mg dose strength (*Rev Prescrire* n° 502).
- *Bedaquiline* (Sirturo<sup>®</sup>) in multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in children from 5 years of age (*Prescrire Int* n° 274).
- *Bedaquiline* (Sirturo<sup>®</sup>) in multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in first-line treatment (*Prescrire Int* n° 274).
- *Cerliponase alfa* (Brineura<sup>®</sup>) in neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis type 2 (*Prescrire Int* n° 281).
- *Enfortumab vedotin* (Padcev<sup>®</sup>) + *pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) in unresectable or metastatic urothelial carcinoma (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) after surgery in certain renal cancers (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) before and after surgery in certain triple-negative breast cancers (*Prescrire Int* n° 273).
- *Primaquine* (Primaquine Sanofi<sup>®</sup>) in the prevention of malaria relapses due to *Plasmodium vivax* or *Plasmodium ovate* (*Rev Prescrire* n° 505).
- *Trastuzumab emtansine* (Kadcyla<sup>®</sup>) in certain breast cancers, after neoadjuvant treatment with *trastuzumab* + chemotherapy and surgery (*Prescrire Int* n° 279).

## POSSIBLY HELPFUL

- *Aflibercept* (Eylea<sup>®</sup>) in retinopathy of prematurity (*Prescrire Int* n° 276).
- *Apomorphine* sublingual film (Kynmobi<sup>®</sup>) in "off" episodes in Parkinson's disease (*Prescrire Int* n° 270).
- *Atezolizumab* for subcutaneous injection (Tecentriq<sup>®</sup>) in various cancers (*Prescrire Int* n° 273).
- *Dolutegravir + abacavir + lamivudine* (Triumeq<sup>®</sup>) in HIV infection in children weighing 6 kg to 14 kg (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Dupilumab* (Dupixent<sup>®</sup>) in eosinophilic oesophagitis in adults (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Efgartigimod alfa* (Vyvgart<sup>®</sup>) by subcutaneous injection in generalised myasthenia gravis (*Prescrire Int* n° 274).
- *Fruquintinib* (Fruzaqla<sup>®</sup>) in metastatic colorectal cancer (*Prescrire Int* n° 279).
- *Lanadelumab* (Takhzyro<sup>®</sup>) in the long-term prevention of hereditary angioedema attacks in children (*Prescrire Int* n° 270).
- *Letermovir* (Prevymis<sup>®</sup>) in the prevention of cytomegalovirus infection following kidney transplantation (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Melatonin* (Adaflex<sup>®</sup>, Voquily<sup>®</sup>) in insomnia in children with ADHD not taking a psychostimulant (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *Omalizumab* (Xolair<sup>®</sup>) 300-mg dose strength and pre-filled pens in severe allergic asthma (*Prescrire Int* n° 272).
- *Oxazepam* 5-mg and 25-mg tablets (Oxazepam Arrow<sup>®</sup>) in anxiety or alcohol withdrawal (*Rev Prescrire* n° 502).
- *Pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) before and after surgery in certain lung cancers (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) during and after chemoradiotherapy in certain cervical cancers (*Prescrire Int* n° 280).
- *Pembrolizumab* (Keytruda<sup>®</sup>) in inoperable or metastatic gastric or gastro-oesophageal junction adenocarcinoma (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *rAdamts13* (Adzynma<sup>®</sup>) in congenital thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (*Prescrire Int* n° 279).
- *Semaglutide* (Wegovy<sup>®</sup>) in excess body weight (*Prescrire Int* n° 275).
- *Sotatercept* (Winrevair<sup>®</sup>) in pulmonary arterial hypertension (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Tenecteplase* 5000-unit vials (Metalyse<sup>®</sup>) in acute ischaemic stroke (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Trifluridine + tipiracil* (Lonsurf<sup>®</sup>) + *bevacizumab* in metastatic colorectal cancer after 2 lines of treatment (*Prescrire Int* n° 273).
- *Zolbetuximab* (Vyloy<sup>®</sup>) in metastatic or inoperable CLDN18.2-positive gastric adenocarcinoma (*Prescrire Int* n° 280).

## NOT ACCEPTABLE

- *Amivantamab* (Rybrevant<sup>®</sup>) in second-line treatment for non-small cell lung cancer with EGFR exon 19 or 21 mutations (*Prescrire Int* n° 278).
- *Andexanet alfa* (Ondexxya<sup>®</sup>) in xaban-associated bleeding (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *Aripiprazole* 720 mg and 960 mg for injection once every 2 months (Abilify Maintena<sup>®</sup>) (*Prescrire Int* n° 275).
- *Attenuated chikungunya vaccine* (Ixchiq<sup>®</sup>) (*Prescrire Int* n° 276).
- *Bimekizumab* (Bimzelx<sup>®</sup>) in hidradenitis suppurativa (*Prescrire Int* n° 275).
- *Chondroitin* 800-mg tablets (Chondrosulf<sup>®</sup>) in osteoarthritis of the hand, in particular (*Rev Prescrire* n° 496).
- *Ciclosporin* eye drop solution (Vevizye<sup>®</sup>) in moderate to severe dry eye disease (*Prescrire Int* n° 280).
- *Dupilumab* (Dupixent<sup>®</sup>) in eosinophilic oesophagitis in children (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Eculizumab* (Soliris<sup>®</sup>) in myasthenia gravis from 6 years of age (*Prescrire Int* n° 272).
- *Empagliflozin* (Jardiance<sup>®</sup>) in type 2 diabetes from 10 years of age (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *Etrasimod* (Velsipity<sup>®</sup>) in ulcerative colitis (*Prescrire Int* n° 275).
- *Fezolinetant* (Veoza<sup>®</sup>) for menopause-related hot flushes (*Prescrire Int* n° 277).
- *Finasteride* for topical application (Fincrezo<sup>®</sup>) in androgenetic alopecia (*Rev Prescrire* n° 503).
- *Gefapixant* (Lyfnua<sup>®</sup>) in refractory or unexplained chronic cough (*Prescrire Int* n° 275).
- *Insulin icodec* (Awiqli<sup>®</sup>) in type 1 or type 2 diabetes (*Prescrire Int* n° 274).
- *Linzagolix* (Yseltly<sup>®</sup>) in uterine fibroids (*Prescrire Int* n° 270).
- *Luspatercept* (Reblozyl<sup>®</sup>) in anaemia associated with "non-transfusion-dependent" beta-thalassaemia (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *Macrogol 3350 + electrolytes + vitamin C* (Plenvu<sup>®</sup>) for colonic lavage (*Rev Prescrire* n° 498).
- *Melatonin* (Adaflex<sup>®</sup>, Voquily<sup>®</sup>) in insomnia in children with ADHD taking a psychostimulant (*Prescrire Int* n° 271).
- *Selpercatinib* (Retsevmo<sup>®</sup>) as first-line treatment in metastatic RET fusion-positive lung cancer (*Prescrire Int* n° 270).
- *Tadalafil* (Adcirca<sup>®</sup>) in pulmonary arterial hypertension from 2 years of age (*Prescrire Int* n° 276).
- *Tranexamic acid* sachets (Haima<sup>®</sup>) in heavy menstrual bleeding (*Rev Prescrire* n° 500).

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