

Defitelio

Dubai · access guide

How to access Defitelio for severe veno-occlusive disease after stem-cell transplant from Dubai: 2026 pathway via Dubai haematology workup and Abu Dhabi adult HSCT referral

By Reserve Meds clinical & regulatory team. Last reviewed 2026-05-20.

Dubai's haematology and oncology infrastructure handles pre-transplant workup, post-transplant outpatient follow-up, and the broader adult and paediatric haematology pathway, but commercial adult haematopoietic stem-cell transplant (HSCT) administration in the UAE is concentrated in Abu Dhabi at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City, and Burjeel Medical City. American Hospital Dubai, Mediclinic City Hospital, King's College Hospital London Dubai, Saudi German Hospital Dubai, and NMC Specialty handle Dubai adult and paediatric haematology referrals with cross-emirate routing to Abu Dhabi adult HSCT centres for transplant. Defitelio (defibrotide sodium) is the only FDA-approved therapy for severe hepatic veno-occlusive disease (VOD) with renal or pulmonary dysfunction post-HSCT, and Defitelio is not on the standard UAE EDE formulary as of 2026. For a Dubai-resident patient who develops severe post-HSCT VOD, the patient is almost always already at the Abu Dhabi HSCT centre (or cross-border at KFSHRC Riyadh) where the transplant was performed, and Defitelio is administered in that inpatient setting.

This page explains how the pathway works in 2026 for a Dubai-resident patient already inside an Abu Dhabi or cross-border HSCT admission with severe-VOD: when Defitelio is indicated, who confirms the diagnosis, and what the Dubai-side family logistics and Reserve Meds operational support look like.

Why Defitelio, and when

Defitelio is defibrotide sodium, a purified mixture of single-stranded oligodeoxyribonucleotides from porcine intestinal mucosa. FDA-approved March 2016 for adult and paediatric patients aged 1 month and older with hepatic VOD with renal or pulmonary dysfunction post-HSCT. Severe post-HSCT VOD has day-100 mortality approaching 75 percent without Defitelio; pivotal data show day-100 survival of 38.2 percent on Defitelio versus 25.0 percent on historical control.

For a Dubai-resident patient the Defitelio decision is made by the treating HSCT-centre transplant haematologist at the bedside (Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi for adult, KFSHRC Riyadh for cross-border adult or paediatric, Sidra Doha for paediatric cross-border). The Reserve Meds role is Dubai-side family logistics coordination, financial pre-authorisation, and post-transplant Dubai outpatient pathway coordination.

What Defitelio is, in plain language

Defibrotide is endothelium-targeted. It increases tissue plasminogen activator in the hepatic sinusoidal endothelium and reduces endothelial activation. It does not measurably prolong PT, aPTT, or INR at therapeutic doses, which is the operational distinction from systemic anticoagulants (all contraindicated in severe post-HSCT VOD).

The drug is given as 6.25 mg/kg IV every 6 hours over 2 hours each, for a minimum of 21 days and a maximum of 60 days. Given through a central line, in a transplant unit or ICU setting.

Eligibility for Defitelio at the treating HSCT centre

Standard FDA-aligned eligibility:

1. Prior HSCT within the prior 21 days. 2. VOD per Baltimore or Modified Seattle criteria. 3. Severe VOD: renal or pulmonary dysfunction. 4. Age 1 month or older. 5. No active uncontrolled bleeding. 6. No concurrent systemic anticoagulant or fibrinolytic that cannot be held. 7. Adequate central venous access.

The diagnosis is made at the bedside by the treating transplant team. The Dubai-resident patient or family is not making this eligibility determination.

The Dubai prescribing and supply picture, plainly

The Emirates Drug Establishment (EDE) is the federal regulator. Defitelio is not on the standard EDE formulary as of 2026. Dubai Health Authority (DHA) coordinates Dubai-emirate dispensing pathway, but commercial HSCT administration and severe-VOD management are concentrated in Abu Dhabi adult centres rather than in Dubai. The two operational supply pathways at Abu Dhabi adult HSCT centres are hospital named-patient stock and single-patient Article 5 import under MOHAP. [VERIFY: current EDE registration status and Abu Dhabi HSCT centre hospital stocking patterns at intake.]

The Dubai-relevant centre network for severe post-HSCT VOD:

- **Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi (CCAD)**: the cross-emirate adult HSCT referral centre for Dubai-resident patients. Defitelio access via hospital named-patient stock or Article 5 import. - **Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City (SSMC)**: cross-emirate adult haematology referral with paediatric BMT capability in build. - **Burjeel Medical City, Abu Dhabi**: cross-emirate adult oncology and BMT referral. - **Dubai adult haematology and oncology centres**: American Hospital Dubai, Mediclinic City Hospital, King's College Hospital London Dubai, Saudi German Hospital Dubai, NMC Specialty, Mediclinic Parkview, Dr Sulaiman Al Habib, Aster Hospital. These centres handle Dubai workup, pre-transplant referral coordination, and post-transplant outpatient care, but are not adult HSCT administration centres for commercial cell therapy or transplant.

For Dubai-resident patients requiring HSCT, the standard pathway is referral to Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi or to KFSHRC Riyadh for adult cases, and to KFSHRC Riyadh or Sidra Medicine Doha for paediatric cases. Any severe post-HSCT VOD that develops is managed at the treating centre where Defitelio is stocked. Repatriation to Dubai happens only after the acute VOD episode resolves and the patient is stable for outpatient follow-up.

Insurance pathways: Saada and Enaya for Dubai nationals; DHA employer plans and commercial cover for residents. Cross-emirate referral to Abu Dhabi or cross-border referral to KFSHRC requires pre-authorisation through the relevant payer, coordinated by the Dubai referring haematologist with Reserve Meds support.

Cost band

US list price approximately USD 825 per 200 mg vial; 21-day adult drug-only course approximately USD 156,000 (approximately AED 573,000 at indicative 2026 cross rates). Full cost of care for a severe-VOD episode including the inpatient transplant unit episode commonly USD 350,000 to USD 1.2M (approximately AED 1.3 to 4.4M).

What to expect on the Defitelio pathway

Day 0 (HSCT day 8 to day 21 at the treating centre): clinical deterioration; severe VOD diagnosis confirmed by the treating transplant team. Systemic anticoagulants and fibrinolytics held. Defitelio drawn from hospital pharmacy stock or Article 5 import initiated.

Day 0 to day 21: minimum course of 6.25 mg/kg IV q6h over 2 hours each. Daily inpatient monitoring at the treating centre; transfusion support; renal replacement therapy and mechanical ventilation if indicated.

Day 21 onwards: continue up to 60-day maximum if VOD has not resolved. Repatriation to Dubai only after the acute episode resolves and the patient is stable for outpatient follow-up at the Dubai post-transplant haematology clinic.

When Defitelio is the wrong drug

For a Dubai-resident patient at the treating HSCT centre who does not meet severe-VOD criteria, who has active uncontrolled bleeding, who has a porcine-product hypersensitivity, or who is on a systemic anticoagulant that cannot be held, the operational alternative is supportive care alone. The porcine-derived sourcing is a documented religious-ethical consideration; the published Islamic jurisprudence consensus for porcine-derived medicines used in life-threatening conditions follows the principle of dharura.

What Reserve Meds does on this case

We are a US-based concierge coordinator. We are not the prescriber and not the dispensing pharmacy. On a Dubai-resident Defitelio case the patient is at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, KFSHRC Riyadh, or another HSCT referral centre in the inpatient setting; we coordinate Dubai-side family logistics and cross-emirate or cross-border transport, run financial pre-authorisation alongside clinical pre-authorisation with the Dubai payer, support the family through the inpatient experience, and stay with the case through the 21 to 60 day Defitelio course, the broader HSCT recovery, and the eventual repatriation to Dubai for outpatient post-transplant haematology follow-up. Clinical decisions remain with the treating transplant haematologist and the HSCT centre care team.

Reserve Meds's role

US-based concierge coordinator for cross-border specialty medicine. We are not the prescriber, not the dispensing pharmacy, and not the manufacturer. All clinical decisions remain with your treating physician.

Reserve Meds

reserved for you.

Composite case examples. This document is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Please consult your treating physician.

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