

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 130

Date: 10 June 2026

Safety guidance

1. Rivastigmine transdermal patch reminder: Risk of medication error when switching between formulations

Rivastigmine patches are available in both daily (Almuriva[®], Exelon[®]) and twice-weekly (Zeyzelf[®]) formulations. Due to ongoing supply issues patients may be required to switch between formulations and therefore increase the risk for dosing errors. The following recommendations are advised:

- Prescribe by brand to ensure the intended formulation is selected.
- Care is needed when switching between once-daily and twice-weekly patches to avoid the risk of dosing error.
- Educate patients/carers on the application frequency and technique, especially if switching to/from the daily patch.
- Be alert to new patterns of side effects or potential overdose, including nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, hypertension, bradycardia and/or syncope, hallucinations, malaise, and falls.

Zeyzelf[®] patches are a 2-part system containing transdermal patch PLUS adhesive cover. It is important to educate patients/carers on patch application - education material is available via the following links:

- Patch application & diary: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/rmm/2808/Document>
- Application guidance and video: [Healthcare Professionals - Zeyzelf[®]](#)
- Application guidance and video: [Patient and Care Giver - Zeyzelf[®]](#)

For general safety considerations around transdermal patch prescribing, SPS (Specialist Pharmacy Service) has some useful information. [LINK](#)

2. MHRA drug safety update: Finasteride and dutasteride – updated safety warnings for psychiatric side effects and sexual dysfunction [LINK](#)

Following MHRA review, the product information for finasteride and dutasteride containing medicines is being updated to provide more information on the risk of suicidal thoughts, sexual dysfunction and depression. Advice and guidance are provided for healthcare professionals.

3. MHRA drug safety update: Nasal decongestant sprays and drops containing xylometazoline hydrochloride / oxymetazoline hydrochloride: increased risk of rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis with overuse [LINK](#)

Following a review of the available evidence, the MHRA has limited use of nasal decongestant sprays containing xylometazoline and oxymetazoline to a maximum of 5 days due to side effects of prolonged use, including rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis.

Local guidance

4. ADHD in Adult and Children Shared Care Guidelines (SCG)

HIOW ADHD SCG for adults and children have been updated. The latest versions are available on the HIOW ICB website: [Shared Care :: NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight](#)

For direct links to the SCG please see below:

- [Atomoxetine Shared Care Guidelines for Hampshire ICS.pdf](#)
- [Dexamfetamine Shared Care Guidelines for Hampshire ICS.pdf](#)
- [Guanfacine Shared Care Guidelines for Hampshire ICS.pdf](#)
- [Lisdexamfetamine Shared Care Guideline for Hampshire ICS.pdf](#)
- [Methylphenidate Shared Care Guideline for Hampshire ICS.pdf](#)

5. PGD for Salbutamol use in spirometry [LINK](#)

The PGD for Salbutamol use in spirometry has been developed by the HIOW ICB for use within GP practices. Before use it will need to be signed/authorised for local use by each practice manager and lead GP. This cannot be done at PCN level as PCNs are not currently listed as an authorising body for PGD's.

6. Back-up antibiotic prescribing guidance for primary care [LINK](#)

Primary care staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this guidance on back-up (previously known as delayed) antibiotic prescribing, developed by NHS England and the South West region and now adopted for local use. The guidance supports safe, evidence-based antimicrobial stewardship, outlining when and how to use back-up prescriptions appropriately to promote patient self-care, effective safety-netting, and reduce unnecessary antibiotic use while maintaining patient safety.

NICE guidelines

7. Anaphylaxis: assessment and referral after emergency treatment – updated guidance (NG258) [LINK](#)

Updated guideline includes new recommendations on period of observation based on the UK Resuscitation Council guidelines. Other amendments include ensuring at discharge that all patients have 2 in-date adrenaline auto-injectors and know how to use them.

Please refer to Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance Bulletin no 107 for further advice on weight thresholds for use of paediatric adrenaline autoinjectors [LINK](#)

The summary of product characteristics for EpiPen® and Jext® recommend the following:

- EpiPen Jnr® - 7.5 – 25 kg
- EpiPen® auto injector 0.3 mg – Over 25kg
- Jext® 150mcg - 15kg and 30kg
- Jext® 300mcg – Over 30kg

8. Neonatal infection: antibiotics for prevention and treatment – updated guidance (NG195) [LINK](#)

Updated guidance includes new recommendations on when to switch from intravenous to oral antibiotics when treating suspected early-onset neonatal infection, and updated information on how to assess the risk posed by a mother's waters breaking before birth.

9. Acne vulgaris: management – updated guidance (NG198) [LINK](#)

Guidance updated to remove the need for 2 independent healthcare professionals to approve the use of isotretinoin in people under 18 years because this is no longer a regulatory requirement. Instead, the MHRA has introduced alternative risk minimisation measures.

Other

10. Pharmacological management of migraine: updated guideline (SIGN 155) [LINK](#)

This updated guideline provides recommendations on prophylactic management using pharmacological therapies or devices. The focus is on adults with acute migraine and preventative treatment in people with episodic or chronic migraine and medication-overuse headache.

11. SPS update: Switching doxazosin XL tablets to doxazosin standard tablets [LINK](#)

Fully reviewed and updated webpage provides guidance on switching doxazosin XL tablets to standard release tablets. National guidance does not recommend routine use of doxazosin XL tablets as they provide no additional benefit in efficacy and are significantly more expensive.

12. An introduction to drug allergy with a focus on penicillin allergy de-labelling (PADL) 25 June 2026 | 1-2pm | [Register here](#)

This webinar is primarily aimed at GPs, pharmacists and advanced nurse practitioners (ANPs) who will be undertaking the PADL reviews but will also be of interest to other primary care staff involved in the management of patients with penicillin allergy.

The webinar will discuss:

- why children and young people might be labelled with a penicillin allergy
- the importance of penicillin allergy de-labelling including the role in antimicrobial stewardship (AMS)
- practical approaches to penicillin allergy de-labelling including asking the right questions and making a risk assessment
- step by step guide how to use the Wessex Allergy Network Paediatric Allergy Penicillin Allergy de-labelling guidelines
- how you can safely de-label patients in your own clinical practice
- the NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB GP practice incentive scheme for PADL

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Local medicines optimisation teams can be contacted via their generic team mailbox: See [LINK](#)
previous bulletins can be found hosted on the ICS website here: [LINK](#)