



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2024/081

Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 01/08/2024

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules are out of stock from early August until w/c 16th September 2024.
- Unlicensed imports of desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules have been sourced, lead times vary.

Actions Required

In primary care, clinicians should:

- identify all patients prescribed DDAVP® 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection and check if they have sufficient supplies until the resupply date;
- for patients with insufficient supplies, liaise with pharmacy teams to confirm local stock holdings. Where there is insufficient licensed stock available, pharmacy teams should place orders for unlicensed imports of desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection (see supporting information below); or
- if unlicensed imports cannot be sourced in time, or are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on alternative management options.

NHS provider trust pharmacy procurement teams and their local Medication Safety Officer should work with appropriate clinical leads to:

- review current stockholding to identify if there is sufficient stock to cover the out of stock period.
- If necessary, place urgent orders for unlicensed desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection (see supporting information below); and where there is an urgent need:
 - liaise with pharmacy services to request mutual aid, facilitated by Regional Pharmacy Procurement Specialists; or
- if the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on alternative management options.

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml injection is licensed for:

- the diagnosis and treatment of cranial diabetes insipidus (adult treatment dose 1 to 4 micrograms once daily; children and infant doses from 0.4 micrograms, by SC, IM or IV injection);

*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/>

- increasing Factor VIII:C and Factor VIII:Ag in patients with mild to moderate haemophilia or von Willebrand's disease undergoing surgery or following trauma (0.4 micrograms per kg by IV infusion)

It also has a licence for establishing renal concentration capacity, treating headache resulting from a lumbar puncture, and testing fibrinolytic response.

National Patient Safety Alert on risk to patients with cranial diabetes insipidus when desmopressin is omitted or delayed

Desmopressin is considered a life sustaining medication when used to treat cranial diabetes insipidus. It is most commonly administered as a nasal spray or oral tablets, but may also be given as an injection, which is useful in the treatment of acutely unwell or fasting patients. The dose of desmopressin is different depending on the indication for use and formulation. An Alert issued in 2016 highlighted reports to the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) of dosing errors with resulting patient harm, and several incidents where omission of desmopressin resulted in severe dehydration and death. The main themes from reported incidents of desmopressin omission, included: a lack of awareness of the critical nature of desmopressin amongst medical, pharmacy and nursing staff; and poor availability of desmopressin within inpatient clinical areas where it was often not kept as a stock item.

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed desmopressin 4micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules and vials (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

- BAP Pharma
- Mawdsleys
- Qmed Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
- Smartway

Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. Unlicensed imports do not undergo any central quality assessment or suitability evaluation. Therefore, any import must be locally assessed in line with local unlicensed medicines processes.

Please see the links below for further information:

- [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products](#), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- [Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC),

When prescribing a product that is not licensed in the UK due to a supply issue with the licensed alternative prescribers must indicate on the FP10 prescription that an unlicensed product is required. This can be done in one of the following two ways:

Electronic prescriptions – if the required unlicensed product is shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should select:

- Desmopressin 4micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules (imported)
- Desmopressin 4micrograms/1ml solution for injection vials (imported)

Paper prescriptions – where the unlicensed product is not shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should use a paper prescription and annotate with the following wording: “**special order**”.

Links to further information

[BNF: Desmopressin](#)

[SmPC DDAVP/desmopressin injection](#)

[Society for Endocrinology Clinical Guidance: Inpatient management of cranial diabetes insipidus](#)

[WFH guidelines for the management of haemophilia](#)

[NHSE Patient Safety Alert \(2016\): Risk of severe harm or death when desmopressin is omitted or delayed inpatients with cranial diabetes insipidus](#)

Enquiries

Enquiries from NHS Trusts in England should in the first instance be directed to your Regional Pharmacy Procurement Specialist (RPPS) or Associate RPPS, who will escalate to national teams if required.

REGION	Lead RPPS	Email	Associate RPPS	Email
Midlands	Andi Swain	andi.swain@nhs.net	vacant	
East of England	James Kent	james.kent@nhs.net	Tracy McMillan	tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net
London	Jackie Eastwood	jacqueline.eastwood@gstt.nhs.uk	Daniel Johnson	Daniel.Johnson@gstt.nhs.uk
North East and Yorkshire	David Allwood	davidallwood@nhs.net	Penny Daynes	penny.daynes@nhs.net
North West	Richard Bateman	richard.bateman@liverpoolft.nhs.uk	Andy Stewart	Andrew.stewart@liverpoolft.nhs.uk
South East	Alison Ashman	Alison.Ashman@berkshire.nhs.uk	Melanie Renney	melanie.renney@berkshire.nhs.uk
South West	Danny Palmer	danny.palmer@uhbw.nhs.uk	Natalie Bryson	Natalie.Bryson@uhbw.nhs.uk

Scotland

nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot

Wales

MedicinesShortages@gov.wales

Northern Ireland

RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net

All other organisations should send enquiries about this notice to the DHSC Medicine Supply Team quoting reference number MSN/2024/081.

Email: DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.