



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2024/083

Cefalexin 500mg tablets

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 07/08/2024

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Cefalexin 500mg tablets are out of stock until mid-September 2024.
- Cefalexin 500mg capsules remain available and can support an uplift in demand.
- Alternative cefalexin preparations remain available but are unable to support an uplift in demand.
- A Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for cefalexin 500mg tablets was issued on 06/08/2024.

Actions Required

Community pharmacists and dispensing doctors should:

- where a prescription for cefalexin 500mg tablets is presented and cannot be fulfilled, cefalexin 500mg capsules should be supplied in accordance with SSP 072;
- ensure the cautions and exclusion criteria are taken into account when considering using an SSP; and
- ensure patients/parents/carers are counselled regarding the switch in formulation, and acceptability of gelatin in the capsules.

If the patient is deemed ineligible or does not consent to receive the capsule formulation via the SSP, they should be promptly referred back to the prescriber.

Prescribers should:

- not initiate new patients on cefalexin 500mg tablets until the supply issue has resolved;
- consider prescribing cefalexin 500mg capsules, if suitable, checking patient acceptability of gelatin content of capsules; and
- if cefalexin capsules are unsuitable, consider prescribing an alternative antibiotic, taking into account allergies and local and national guidance on antimicrobial prescribing.

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Cefalexin is a 'first generation' cephalosporin licensed for the treatment of the following infections due to susceptible micro-organisms: respiratory tract infections, otitis media, skin and soft tissue infections, bone and joint infections, genito-urinary infections, including acute prostatitis, and dental infections.

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

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

Please refer to the below links for further information:

[SmPC: Cefalexin](#)

[BNF: Cefalexin](#)

[Summary of antimicrobial prescribing guidance - managing common infections](#)

[Serious Shortage Protocol for Cefalexin 500mg tablets](#)

Enquiries

All organisations should send enquiries about this notice to the DHSC Medicine Supply Team quoting reference number MSN/2024/083

Email: DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.