



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2025/017

Levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 27/03/2025

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Levofloxacin 250mg tablets are in limited supply until late April 2025.
- Levofloxacin 500mg tablets are in limited supply until late May 2025.
- Alternative antibiotics remain available and can support increased demand (see supporting information).
- Where alternative antibiotics are not suitable, unlicensed supplies of levofloxacin tablets may be sourced, lead times vary.

Actions Required

Clinicians should:

- prioritise remaining supplies of levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets for patients with severe pneumonia and a severe penicillin allergy;
- consider prescribing an alternative antibiotic in line with NICE Guidance (see supporting information) for the treatment of low or moderate severity pneumonia in patients with a penicillin allergy;
- consider prescribing ciprofloxacin for patients with pyelonephritis or bacterial prostatitis where levofloxacin tablets are unavailable; and
- prescribe unlicensed levofloxacin tablets only where licensed alternatives are not appropriate, lead times vary.

If the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from microbiology teams on alternative management options.

When prescribing alternative antibiotics, prescribers should consider penicillin allergy severity, indication, Gram positive/negative coverage, pregnancy status, and local prescribing guidelines.

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Levofloxacin is used in the treatment of patients with severe pneumonia who are penicillin allergic and for pyelonephritis or bacterial prostatitis.

In patients with low to moderate severity pneumonia who are penicillin allergic, clinicians should refer to NICE guidance NG138 on antibiotic prescribing for [community acquired](#) pneumonia and NG139 on antibiotic prescribing for [hospital acquired](#) pneumonia.

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

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

Alternative fluoroquinolones

Moxifloxacin has an overlapping spectrum with levofloxacin, except for *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* cover where levofloxacin has some activity, but moxifloxacin does not.

Ciprofloxacin also has an overlapping spectrum with levofloxacin except for Gram-positive organisms such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pneumoniae* where levofloxacin is active, but ciprofloxacin is not. If ciprofloxacin is being offered as an alternative, Gram-positive cover should be added where relevant (e.g. for community-acquired pneumonia).

Links to further information

[SmPC levofloxacin](#)

[BNF quinolones](#)

[BNF levofloxacin](#)

[SmPC ciprofloxacin](#)

[BNF Respiratory system infections, antibacterial therapy treatment summary](#)

[NICE NG138 Pneumonia \(community-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#)

[NICE NG138 Pneumonia \(community-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing – visual summary](#)

[NICE NG139 Pneumonia \(hospital-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#)

[NICE NG139 Pneumonia \(hospital-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing – visual summary](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets. Please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies:

- Alium
- 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:

- Levofloxacin 250mg tablets (imported)
- Levofloxacin 500mg tablets (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**”.

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	Dav Manku	Dav.Manku@uhb.nhs.uk
East of England	James Kent	james.kent@nhs.net	Tracy McMillan	tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net
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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/2025/017

Email: DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.