

# Prescribing Points



Oxfordshire

Cinical Commissioning Group

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This newsletter is for all health professionals in Oxfordshire and is written by the Medicines Management Team, Oxfordshire CCG, Jubilee House, Oxford Business Park South, Oxford, OX4 2LH

## Triptorelin

Triptorelin has previously been [recommended](#) locally as a first choice option to goserelin or leuprorelin in the treatment of prostate cancer. A six monthly preparation of triptorelin (Decapeptyl SR 22.5mg) is available and has the advantage of saving on both GP and patient consultation time.

The BNF price of triptorelin (decapeptyl brand) is £414 for the 6 monthly preparation and an additional discount is available for GPs purchasing via the manufacturer. It is the cheapest long acting gonadorelin analogue. Triptorelin now has equivalent indications to goserelin in the treatment of prostate cancer. Uro-oncologists at OUH will be recommending triptorelin as an option for suitable patients and also that existing patients may be switched from goserelin or leuprorelin to triptorelin. The uro-oncologists advice is that first dose should be a monthly preparation to ensure the drug is tolerated and that the long acting preparation should only be used for patients on long term treatment. Triptorelin, goserelin and leuprorelin should all be used in line with new [NICE Prostate Cancer Guidelines CG175](#).

### So What?

Triptorelin can be used for the treatment of prostate cancer in line with NICE guidelines. The 6 monthly preparation reduces GP appointment time and has cost advantages over other drugs in class for patients on long term treatment. The first dose should be a monthly preparation to ensure the drug is tolerated. The uro-oncologists at OUH will be recommending triptorelin as an option for prostate cancer. Appropriate patients can be switched to triptorelin.

**Codeine use in children** Recent MHRA guidance advised that codeine should only be used to relieve acute moderate pain in children older than 12 years and only if it cannot be relieved by other painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen alone. Also that a significant risk of serious and life-threatening adverse reactions has been identified in children with obstructive sleep apnoea who received codeine after tonsillectomy or adenoidectomy. OUH will use oral morphine (Oramorph) in place of codeine for treating children with pain both in hospital and at home.

**MILD TO MODERATE PAIN 100 micrograms/kg 4 times a day as required** (all ages)

**MODERATE TO SEVERE PAIN 300 micrograms/kg 3-4 hourly as required** (for children >1 year of age)  
For children 1 year or less:

Neonate to 3 months **100 micrograms/kg 3-4 hourly as required**

> 3 months to 1 year **200 micrograms/kg 3-4 hourly as required**

Morphine Sulphate 10mg in 5ml will be supplied as "to take home" medicine for use after certain procedures eg. tonsillectomy, some orthopaedic procedures, associated with a higher analgesic requirement.

Patient specific bottles of Morphine Sulphate liquid will be provided with clear directions and a marked oral syringe

## **Inappropriate Prescribing Requests from Secondary Care**

While the majority of requests from secondary care to primary care to take over prescribing responsibility are appropriate, occasionally they are not. Any requests from secondary care (or other provider) to prescribe a drug which is not endorsed for use in primary care on our traffic light list should be reported via Datix; this allows the CCG to monitor and report back on all such requests. In addition, it will be necessary for individual GPs to communicate directly with the requester to explain that they will not be able to take on the prescribing as suggested. The CCG collates information on such requests so they can be raised directly with the providers to minimise future (inappropriate) requests or to prompt review of prescribing guidance where appropriate.

**All prescribing recommendations from secondary care to Oxfordshire Primary Care teams should be in line with local guidelines (Area Prescribing Committee Guidelines and Traffic Light Classification) unless clinically justified and approved. Inappropriate requests should be reported via Datix.**

## **Diclofenac: contra indications and warnings after a Europe-wide review of cardiovascular safety**

- Diclofenac is now contraindicated in patients with established:
  - ischaemic heart disease
  - peripheral arterial disease
  - cerebrovascular disease
  - congestive heart failure (New York Heart Association [NYHA] classification II–IV)

Patients with these conditions should be switched to an alternative treatment at their next routine appointment

- Diclofenac treatment should only be initiated after careful consideration for patients with significant risk factors for cardiovascular events (eg, hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, diabetes mellitus, smoking)

### **So what?**

- The decision to prescribe an NSAID should be based on an assessment of a patient's individual risk factors, including any history of cardiovascular and gastrointestinal illness
- Naproxen and low-dose ibuprofen are considered to have the most favourable thrombotic cardiovascular safety profiles of all non-selective NSAIDs
- The lowest effective dose should be used for the shortest duration necessary to control symptoms. A patient's need for symptomatic relief and response to treatment should be re-evaluated periodically

## Antihistamines

The annual spend on antihistamines in Oxfordshire is £277,000 with half of that amount being spent on antihistamines that can be bought over the counter (OTC). Could patients that are receiving OTC antihistamines on prescription buy them instead? The cost of buying OTC antihistamines is minimal.

For example

Product	Antihistamine	Cost per pack	Cost per tablet
<del>Tesco Non Drowsy Hay fever/Allergy Relief</del>	<del>Loratadine 10 mg</del>	<del>£1.40 for 14 tabs</del>	<del>£0.10</del>
<del>Sainsburys Hay fever &amp; Allergy Relief</del>	<del>Loratadine 10 mg</del>	<del>£1.50 for 14 tabs</del>	<del>£0.11</del>
Non drowsy Sainsburys Hay fever & Allergy Relief	Loratadine 10 mg	£1.50 for 14 tabs	£0.11
<del>Non drowsy Sainsburys Hay fever &amp; Allergy Relief Tablets</del>	<del>Cetirizine 10 mg</del>	<del>£1.50 for 14 tabs</del>	<del>£0.11</del>
Sainsburys Hay fever & Allergy Relief Tablets	Cetirizine 10 mg	£1.50 for 14 tabs	£0.11
<del>Asda Hay fever &amp; Allergy Relief Tablets</del>	<del>Loratadine 10 mg</del>	<del>£1.30 for 14 tabs</del>	<del>£0.093</del>
Asda Hay fever & Allergy Relief Tablets	Cetirizine 10 mg	£1.30 for 14 tabs	£0.093
Piriton allergy tablets SEDATING	Chlorphenamine 4mg	£3.59 for 30 tabs	£0.12
<del>Asda Hay fever &amp; Allergy Relief</del>	<del>Cetirizine 10 mg</del>	<del>£1.30 for 14 tabs</del>	<del>£0.093</del>

Tablets

There is no evidence to suggest that prescription only medicines (POM) antihistamines are any more efficacious than OTC antihistamines. Clinical Knowledge Summaries (CKS) for the treatment of allergic rhinitis recommend once daily cetirizine, fexofenadine and loratadine (fexofenadine being the only POM).

## Calcos and Adcal D3 Tablets are Interchangeable

Calceos has previously been the first line calcium and vitamin D product for OCCG. However this this was inconsistent with OUH where Adcal D3 is the first line product. These products are very similar in composition of calcium and vitamin D and now in price (approx £3.60 for 56). It is therefore acceptable to prescribe either product and there are no anticipated issues with patients being switched to Adcal D3 on admission to hospital and remaining on that product after discharge.

## Medicine Price Increases - Update

Drug	Price increase	Alternative	Alternative price
<b>Co-amoxiclav 250/125 (21) 500/125 (21)</b>	From £2.18 to £6.79 From £3.38 to £6.93	Check sensitivities before prescribing. Consider amoxicillin.	250 mg = £0.95 500 mg = £1.20
<b>Mebeverine 135mg tabs (100)</b>	From £3.76 to £18.00	Review need. Colofac (Abbot)	£7.52
<b>Trazodone 100 mg caps (56) 150 mg tab (28) 50mg caps (84)</b>	From £4.42 to £28.69 From £4.30 to £18.59 From £4.58 to £24.37	If possible do not initiate. Review need. Note liquid is very much more expensive	