



**Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Seirbhís Aisíocha Príomhchúraim**
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6th January 2023

Circular 004/23

RE: Supply of Liquid Antibiotics

Dear Pharmacist,

Please find attached communication issued from Dr Una Fallon, Chair of HSE Incident Management Team for Group A Strep in relation to the current status of supply of liquid preparations of antibiotics.

Yours faithfully,

Shaun Flanagan
Assistant National Director
Primary Care Reimbursement Service



Memo

To: Prescribers, Pharmacists, Consultant Microbiologists, Infectious Diseases Physicians, Antimicrobial Pharmacists, Consultants in Public Health Medicine

From: Dr Una Fallon
Chair of HSE Incident Management Team for Group A Strep
National Clinical Lead Acute Operations Response,
Office of the National Clinical Director for Health Protection.

Date: 04/01/2023

Subject: Current status of supply of liquid preparations of antibiotics

Ref: 2 pages

Dear Colleagues,

You will be aware of recent concerns about antibiotic supply. There has been an increased demand for antibiotics over the holiday period. The work and support of GPs and Pharmacists during this challenging time is acknowledged.

The following is an update on the supply of liquid preparations of antibiotics.

Phenoxymethylpenicillin

- Kopen™ both liquid preparations out of stock with no expected date of re-supply
- Calvepen™ suspension out of stock, potential re-supply in late January

Cefalexin

- 125mg/5ml - Supply currently available
- 250mg/5ml - Shortage notified due to unexpected increase in demand, resupply expected in April

Amoxicillin

- 125mg/5ml & 250mg/5ml - Limited stock at wholesale level. Resupply expected in February

Clarithromycin

- 125mg/5ml – Supply currently available
- 250mg/5ml – Shortage due to unexpected increase in demand, re-supply expected in mid-January□

Co-amoxiclav

- 400 mg/57 mg/5 ml powder for oral suspension (35ml unit) – Shortage notified
- 400 mg/57 mg/5 ml powder for oral suspension (70ml unit) – Supply currently available
- 125mg/31.25mg powder for oral suspension - Supply currently available

Flucloxacillin

- Supply currently available.



This position is accurate based on date of issue. For on-going updates on current and resolved shortages, please refer to the [HPRA website](#) which is updated daily.

For prescribers:

Rounding doses

As liquid formulation may be unavailable, consider rounding doses to the nearest capsule/tablet strength to facilitate administration of capsule/tablets. For further guidance on this see the following resource. Helping children to swallow tablets [Healthier Together | Pill Swallowing \(Kidzmed\)](#) (www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk).

Liaising with community Pharmacy

If a patient is being prescribed antibiotics, please ensure a supply is available in the community pharmacy.

Prescribing alternatives

It may be necessary to prescribe an alternative antibiotic if supply of the first line agent is not possible. This can be done by specifying an alternative antibiotic to the first line choice when sending the prescription to the pharmacist. Alternative first line agents can be found on www.antibioticprescribing.ie

Duration of treatment

With added demands on limited antibiotic stock, please keep antibiotic prescriptions to the recommended duration.

For children with uncomplicated bacterial infections being sent home on antibiotics (without requiring admission) please refer to the HSE community antibiotic guidelines for advice on antibiotic choice and duration: www.antibioticprescribing.ie

For pharmacists:

Pharmacy teams are experiencing temporary and intermittent interruption of supply of relevant antibiotics due to surge in demand. Marketing authorisation holders and wholesalers may have implemented allocations to ensure equitable distribution of the medicines.

Please be aware that in some cases, the products may appear as unavailable on their ordering system but additional stock above an allocation may be accessed by contacting the wholesaler or marketing authorisation holder.

For patients:

Updated resources for patients and the public are available:

- [HPSC factsheets](#)
- [HSE Health A-Z website](#)

Thank you again for your support during this challenging time. We will keep you up to date as the situation unfolds.

Dr Una Fallon

Chair of the HSE Incident Management Team for Group A Strep.