



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2023/103

Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 07/11/2023

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free is out of stock until early February 2024.
- Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension remains available and can support increased demand.
- Where this is not suitable, unlicensed supplies of co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free may be sourced, lead times vary.

Actions Required

All clinicians/prescribers should:

- consider prescribing co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension, which is able to support the market during this time, ensuring that the patient is not intolerant to any of the excipients, and is counselled on the appropriate dose and volume required (see Supporting Information below);
- consider prescribing unlicensed products only where licensed alternatives are not appropriate. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary (see Supporting Information below); and
- if the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on management options.

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Co-trimoxazole **40mg/200mg/5ml** oral suspension sugar free is licensed for use in children aged 12 years and under (infants [>6 weeks to <2 years old] and children [>2 to <12 years old]).

Co-trimoxazole **80mg/400mg/5ml** oral suspension is licensed for use in in children aged >12 to <18 years and adults.

Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension contains different excipients to co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free (see Table 1) and may not be as palatable for some children. Patients with rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance, glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrose-isomaltase insufficiency should not take this medicine. However, in other patients, it may be considered for

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

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

off-label use, once it is confirmed that the patient is not intolerant to any of the excipients, and patient/carer is counselled on the appropriate dose and volume required.

NOTE: 5ml of co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg suspension = 2.5ml of co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg suspension.

Table 1: Excipients specific to each presentation

Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free	Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension
Sorbitol solution 70% (non crystallising) (E420 ii) Sodium Carmellose Sodium Benzoate (E211) Flavour, Banana 81.605P	Syrup or sucrose Sodium carboxymethylcellulose (E467) Ammonium glycyrrhizinate Star Anise Oil

Please refer to the links below:

[SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension](#)

[SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension](#)

[BNF – Co-trimoxazole](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

- The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
 - Alium
 - Genetech
 - Mawdsleys
 - Orifarm
 - Target
- Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. 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:
 - co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free (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, who will escalate to national teams if required.

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Midlands	Andi Swain	andi.swain@nhs.net
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All other organisations should send enquiries about this notice to the DHSC Medicine Supply Team quoting reference number MSN/2023/103.

Email: DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.