



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2022/078

Temazepam 10mg and 20mg tablets

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 15/09/2022

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Temazepam 10mg and 20mg tablets are in limited supply until w/c 5th December 2022.
- Alternative benzodiazepines and non-benzodiazepine hypnotics remain available and will be able to support increased demand.
- Temazepam 10mg/5ml oral solution remains available but cannot support an uplift in demand.
- Where the above options are not suitable, unlicensed supplies of temazepam 10mg tablets may be sourced, lead times vary.

Actions Required

Clinicians should:

- not initiate any new patients on temazepam 10mg and 20mg tablets.

Where patients have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, clinicians should:

- review patients and offer them the opportunity to consider tapering down and discontinuing treatment, with support;
- consider switching to an alternative hypnotic at an equivalent dose (see Supporting Information); for patients unable to discontinue treatment, taking into account their dose and duration of temazepam, and half-life of the alternative, and
- if the above options are not appropriate, consider prescribing unlicensed temazepam 10mg tablets, work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary (see Supporting Information below).
- Advice may need to be sought from mental health services if there is difficulty managing the discontinuation of temazepam or transitioning to another treatment.

Supporting information

Clinical Information

- Ideally, patients should be reviewed to identify those who are willing to discontinue temazepam.
- For chronic users of temazepam who have agreed to discontinue temazepam, a switch to diazepam and a slow withdrawal is recommended ([guidance in the BNF](#)).

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

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

- If patients do not wish to be come off treatment after an informed discussion, there is no particular hypnotic that would be considered as a direct alternative; the following factors should be considered;
 - differences in half-life (including active metabolites)
 - dose and duration of temazepam needs to be taken into account when deciding on an alternative to ensure that patients are not given inappropriately high or low doses of the alternative agent.
 - alternative agents include non-benzodiazepines (Z drugs) or another benzodiazepine. Please refer to [BNF](#) for further information to guide selection. The potential for weaning off treatment in the future should form part of the consultation with patients.
 - patients will benefit from an individualised approach based on Clinical Knowledge Summaries [Benzodiazepine and z-drug withdrawal](#) (April 2022) and [Insomnia](#) (May 2022)

Please click on the following links for further information:

- [BNF temazepam](#)
- [BNF hypnotics and anxiolytics](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

- The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed temazepam 10mg tablets (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
 - Target Healthcare
- 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:
 - Temazepam 10mg 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

If you have any queries, please contact DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.