

Brand change notification

Simvastatin

(10mg, 20mg, 40mg & 80mg tablets)

Lipex changing to Arrow-Simva

The subsidised brand of simvastatin 10mg, 20mg, 40mg and 80mg tablets, a treatment to help lower cholesterol, is changing. Arrow-Simva will replace Lipex as the brand subsidised by PHARMAC.

The information below will help guide you through the changeover period.

Why is the brand changing?

PHARMAC has reached an agreement with a new supplier of simvastatin. This means savings can be made, allowing PHARMAC more funds to subsidise other medicines.

Will the medicine work the same? Yes.

The medicine itself is not changing, only the brand. This means you should have the same effect from taking Arrow-Simva as you would have from taking Lipex.

If you notice any prolonged side effects following the change, you should discuss this with your doctor.

Will the new tablets or pack look different? Yes.

Because the Arrow-Simva tablets are made by a different supplier, they look different, but they contain the same medication. The size and colour of the pack will also be different, but the tablets will still come in blister packs.

Will the new brand cost any more? No.

There will be no extra cost to patients for Arrow-Simva.



Arrow-Simva 40mg



Lipex 40mg

When will the change occur?

- From 1 March 2009, Arrow-Simva will become available fully subsidised, and Lipex will remain available fully subsidised.
- From 1 May 2009, Arrow-Simva will be available fully subsidised. There may be a part payment required for Lipex prescriptions because a full subsidy will no longer be available for Lipex.
- From 1 August 2009, only Arrow-Simva will be fully subsidised. Lipex will no longer be subsidised.

Will the old brand be available after 1 August 2009?

The availability of Lipex after 1 August 2009 will be at the discretion of the pharmaceutical supplier, Merck Sharpe & Dohme. PHARMAC cannot guarantee the availability or price of Lipex. However, all costs of purchasing this brand of simvastatin would have to be met by the patient.

Where can I get more information?

Please phone the PHARMAC helpline, 0800 66 00 50 (between 9 am and 4 pm weekdays).

You can also e-mail brandswitch@pharmac.govt.nz with your queries and/or comments.

Your doctor or pharmacist will also help guide you during the changeover period.

