

Nicotine replacement therapy prescriptions

The maximum dispensing rules for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) were removed from 1 January 2011. We understand that this has resulted in uncertainty among some prescribers about quantities that should be prescribed. It appears that some prescribers are not including dose and quantity of supply on their prescriptions.

Prescribers are reminded that all prescriptions must indicate the total quantity or period of supply, and include a dose and frequency. This is necessary to comply with regulation 41 of the Medicines Regulations 1984.

For more information please refer to www.pharmac.govt.nz/2011/01/21/

Fentanyl Patches – new listing and Special Authority Change

Mylan Fentanyl Patch (fentanyl transdermal patches) will be fully subsidised from 1 February 2011. This includes a new lower strength patch of 12.5 µg per hour.

All strengths of Mylan Fentanyl Patch will be fully subsidised without the requirement for a Special Authority approval.

The other currently funded brand of subsidised fentanyl patches, Durogesic, will remain fully subsidised (via Special Authority) for existing patients only from 1 February 2011 until 31 July 2011. Durogesic patches will not be subsidised for any new patients from 1 February 2011. Durogesic will be delisted from the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 August 2011.

Mylan Fentanyl Patch has been assessed by Medsafe as being bioequivalent to Durogesic so we would expect that changing brands would not cause any problems in most patients.

It is anticipated that the 6-month grand parenting period for Durogesic should allow sufficient time for the majority of patients to complete treatment with Durogesic or to transition to Mylan Fentanyl Patch.

However, if patients do need to change brands we recommend that they are closely monitored and the dose of fentanyl patch is adjusted as necessary according to the patient's clinical response. Further information on the use of fentanyl patches and changing brands of fentanyl patches is provided in Issue 33 (December 2010) of Best Practice Journal. Best Practice Journal can be accessed online at www.bpac.org.nz.

Salbutamol with ipratropium bromide aerosol inhaler – new listing

The Duolin HFA brand of salbutamol 100 µg with ipratropium bromide 20 µg per dose CFC-free, 200 dose OP, aerosol inhaler will be fully subsidised from February 2011. Although supplies of Duolin HFA are not expected to be available until the middle of February 2011, we have decided to list this product now so that once stock becomes available it will be subsidised for patients. Duolin HFA will be an alternative for the currently listed Combivent which is being discontinued as a result of the Montreal protocol obligations to cease production of CFC containing products. Stocks of Combivent are expected to be exhausted within the next few months.



Special Authority Queries: 0800 243 666

General Questions: 0800 66 00 50 (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

Online: www.pharmac.govt.nz/healthpros/Schedule/PHONewsletter

Inpharmation newsletter: www.pharmac.govt.nz/patients/ourviews/inpharmation

Newsletter feedback: email rachel.mackay@pharmac.govt.nz

Please note this is not a complete reference to all changes occurring from 1 February 2011, for the full reference; please consult your Update to the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

“Make life easier, always prescribe generically”

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