

Prescriberfile

From the Primary Care Prescribing Group

Valproate medicines (Epilim ▼, Depakote ▼): Pregnancy Prevention Programme (Prevent) Materials and Local Update

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Please Circulate to All Staff

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Work has been ongoing within NHS Forth Valley to identify and follow-up all female patients aged 12-60 years in line with the [MHRA advice](#) which requires all female patients of childbearing potential to satisfy the conditions of the Pregnancy Prevention Programme (PPP).

In conjunction with the ongoing specialist reviews, the Primary Care Pharmacy Team have identified relevant patients within GP practices with a view to ensuring that all female patients are on appropriate contraception where required and are referred for Specialist review as necessary.

The following support materials are available [online](#) and have been posted out from the manufacturer in the last few weeks:

- [Patient Card](#) – to be given by pharmacists to all female patients who are dispensed valproate medicines to inform them of the risks.
- [Patient Guide](#) – to be provided by the GP/prescriber to girls (of any age) and women of childbearing potential (or their parent/caregiver/responsible person) taking any medicine containing valproate.
- [Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#) – for all prescribers, pharmacists, and other healthcare providers involved in the care of women and girls of childbearing potential using valproate medicines
- [Risk Acknowledgement Form](#) – for the specialist and patient (or their parent/caregiver/responsible person) to sign at initiation and at treatment reviews at least every year. The patient should receive a copy of the form; one copy should be filed in the specialist notes, and one copy sent to the patient's GP (see below for local advice).
- Stickers with warning symbols to attach to the pack for supply to the patient will be included in materials to pharmacists.

The requirement for a PPP is applicable to **all premenopausal** female patients unless the prescriber considers that there are compelling reasons to indicate that there is no risk of pregnancy.

Ref: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/valproate-use-by-women-and-girls> (accessed 30/8/2018)

Forth Valley-specific update:

- It has been agreed that the [Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form](#) should be used by every speciality in Forth Valley with **immediate effect** (if not already doing so).
- The completed and signed Risk Acknowledgement Form (**signed by both the specialist and patient/carer**) will be:
 - ⇒ uploaded onto Clinical Portal **and**
 - ⇒ scanned and **sent to GPs in the usual manner** that each of the specialities usually communicate with GPs.
- All specialities will undertake the **annual Sodium Valproate reviews** as a minimum every 12 months.
- A **Shared Care Protocol** is in the process of being drafted to ensure that there is clarity around the specific actions and responsibilities required of Specialists, GPs and Community Pharmacists.

Key Points of interest:

- Valproate medicines are contraindicated in female patients of childbearing potential unless the Pregnancy Prevention Programme is in place for the patient.
- New Supply Issue Intranet page
- Emerade® now the adrenaline auto-Injector of choice. Doses differ from previous Epipen®
- Updated contact details for the Prescribing Support Team.
- Ensure appropriate prescribing of sunscreen products.

Supply Issues Intranet Page

A new intranet page has been created to replace the previously produced Supply Issues Bulletin.

This will support the supply information messages in ScriptSwitch®.

- Supply issues will be restricted to those products likely to have a major impact, from the information available to the Prescribing Support Team.
- Local advice on suitable alternatives will be included.
- The page is available at:
<http://staffnet.fv.scot.nhs.uk/a-z/pharmacy/area-wide/supply-issues-information/>

Emerade® – Adrenaline Auto-Injector of Choice

It has been agreed by the Area Drugs & Therapeutics Committee (ADTC) that Emerade® is now the adrenaline auto-injector of choice in NHS Forth Valley.

This is based on the following rationale:

- Emerade® is the only auto-injector device currently available in the full range of doses recommended by the Resuscitation Council.
- It has a more appropriate needle length and so reduces the risk of drug not reaching the muscle.
- It is an intuitive device which is easy to administer.

The recommended formulation of Emerade® to be prescribed is:

- Adults and children over 12 years of age - 500 micrograms autoinjector
- Over 12 years but small or prepubertal: 300 micrograms autoinjector
- Under 12 years and over 30kg: 300 micrograms autoinjector
- Under 12 years and 15-30kg: 150 micrograms autoinjector
- Under 15kg: 150 micrograms pen (on specialist advice only)

Due to ongoing supply problems with Epipen® and the lack of availability of a 500 microgram strength device it is recommended that patients are switched to Emerade® when they next request a prescription.

- Emerade® is now the preferred adrenaline auto injector for use in all new patients.
- Prescribe by **BRAND** name.
- Ensure the correct strength of device is prescribed in line with age and body weight—**NB**: this will differ from previously prescribed Epipen® doses.
- GP Surgeries and Community Pharmacies should ensure that patients know how to use the device—online information including a simple graphic and video is available for patients to assist in this process:

<https://www.emerade-bausch.co.uk/patient/how-to-use-emerade>

The Prescribing Support Team has moved...

The Prescribing Support Team has relocated to the Pharmacy Department in Forth Valley Royal Hospital. Our new contact details are:

Prescribing Support Team, Area Pharmacy and Prescribing Support Service, Pharmacy Department, Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Stirling Road, LARBERT FK5 4WR.

Tel: 01324-566722 or 01324-567936, Email: FV-UHB.prescribingsupport@nhs.net

Ensure Appropriate Prescribing of Sunscreen Products

Prescribers are reminded that sunscreen products should only be prescribed on the NHS for indications that are approved by the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances (ACBS). Only those products annotated as ACBS in the British National Formulary (BNF) are approved for prescribing on the NHS for the specific listed indications. Other products are classed as toiletries and should not be prescribed.

EMIS indicates ACBS status on the right-hand side of the product picking list when prescribing a new drug as shown in the screenshot below.

Pack Size	Price
50 ml	£5.05
125 ml	£8.20
500 ml	£18.30

Items Found	Status
SunSense Ultra Lotion SPF 50+	ACBS

Indication of ACBS prescribing status in EMIS product picking list (circled in red)

Sunscreens annotated as ACBS in the BNF are regarded as drugs when prescribed for skin protection against ultra-violet (UV) radiation in abnormal cutaneous photosensitivity e.g. genetic disorders, chronic or recurrent herpes simplex labialis and for photodermatoses such as vitiligo and those due to radiotherapy or due to photosensitivity caused by certain drugs e.g. amiodarone, phenothiazines, or tetracyclines such as demeclocycline.

In order to manage photodermatoses patients should be advised to:

- seek shade.
- wear photoprotective clothing.
- wear sunglasses and wide-brimmed hats.
- ensure appropriate application of sunscreens with a SPF over 30 and with suitable UVA protection.
 - ⇒ apply thickly and liberally approximately every 2 hours.
 - ⇒ ensure application to all areas of the skin including the ears, temples, posterior and lateral neck.

Prescribers should:

- ensure that prescribing of sunscreens is in line with ACBS approved indications.
 - ⇒ If ACBS prescribing criteria are not met then review and stop prescribing the sunscreen and advise the patient to purchase an appropriate sunscreen over-the-counter instead.
- remind patients that sunscreens are not a substitute for covering the skin and avoiding sunlight.
- ensure that patients know how to apply sunscreen products appropriately.

The Forth Valley Formulary sunscreen products of choice are SunSense® Ultra and Uvistat®.

Ref:

Use of sunscreens for approved indications. PrescQIPP Bulletin 138 Sunscreens.
<https://www.prescqipp.info/sunscreens/category/295-sunscreens> (Accessed 30/8/2018)

Contact Information:

General Primary Care Prescribing Advice:

Contact your Primary Care Pharmacist; or alternatively

Primary Care Prescribing Support Team on Tel: 01324-566722 / 01324-567936

For Advice Related to Management of Controlled Drugs:

Kirsty Peacock, Inspection Officer for Controlled Drugs,

NHS Forth Valley, Forth Valley Royal Hospital Tel: 01324-566743