



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2022/082

Dioralyte[®] oral rehydration sachets

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 30/09/2022

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Dioralyte[®] oral rehydration sachets are expected to be in limited supply until late December 2022
- Limited stock of Dioralyte[®] Relief oral powder sachets remain available but cannot support an uplift in demand.
- St Mark's solution is available as an unlicensed special and can support an uplift in demand.
- Kidderminster formula is available as an unlicensed special and can support a partial uplift in demand.
- As an alternative to the unlicensed specials, the individual components* can be purchased from community pharmacies and supermarkets or prescribed, but there have been intermittent supply issues with glucose powder.
- Oral rehydration salts soluble tablets (O.R.S Hydration tablets[®]) (classified as food supplement) are available and can support an uplift in demand.
- Diluted apple juice has been reported to be a potential alternative to electrolyte maintenance fluids in children with mild gastroenteritis and minimal dehydration.

Actions Required

All clinicians in primary and secondary care should:

- consider the use of alternative oral rehydration treatments where stocks of Dioralyte[®] and Dioralyte[®] Relief are unavailable (see supporting information). A local decision should be taken on the appropriateness of using O.R.S Hydration tablets[®], which are classified as a food supplement.

Supporting information

- Dioralyte[®] and Dioralyte[®] Relief are licensed for oral correction of fluid and electrolyte, as well as for the treatment of watery diarrhoea of various aetiologies including gastroenteritis. Dioralyte[®] Relief contains pre-cooked rice which is claimed to return watery stools back to normal more rapidly.
- Dioralyte[®] is licensed for use in infants (BNF definition: from age 28 days), children and adults while Dioralyte[®] Relief is licensed in infants above 3 months of age (off-label use in under 3 months to be considered on case-by-case basis).
- Multiple sachets of Dioralyte[®] (8 sachets) are used to make up 1L of an oral rehydration solution to be drunk over 24 hours in patients with high-output stoma or fistula, unable to maintain adequate hydration.
- St Mark's solution and Kidderminster Formula are unlicensed potassium free glucose-electrolyte mix oral powders, reconstituted into rehydration solutions. They are used mainly in the management of short bowel syndrome, to maintain an adequate fluid balance and minimise stool output, usually in

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

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

patients with potassium 5.0mmol/L or above. When used in place of Dioralyte[®], some patients may require potassium supplementation.

- O.R.S Hydration tablets[®], classified as a food supplement, contain a mix of electrolytes, combined with glucose, formulated to follow World Health Organisation oral rehydration solution guidelines. They are available as soluble tablets in three flavours (lemon, strawberry and blackcurrant) and can be used in patients aged above 3 years. The company has no data on use in younger age groups or in patients with stomas.
- As children may not tolerate oral rehydration solutions due to unpalatability, diluted apple juice has been suggested as an alternative option for those with mild gastroenteritis and minimal dehydration. A Canadian randomised controlled trial (n=647; mean age, 28.3 [SD, 15.9] months) reported that use of half-strength apple juice (50% water and 50% apple juice) and preferred fluids as desired, may be a potential alternative to electrolyte maintenance fluids in such children (see link to study below).

Table 1: Composition of oral rehydration solutions based on recommended volume of water for reconstitution

Presentation	Dioralyte [®] powder in sachet	Dioralyte [®] Relief powder in sachet	St Mark's solution* (26g ready mixed powder)	Kidderminster formula (28.4g pack comprising 3 pots each containing a component)	O.R.S Hydration tablets [®]
Reconstitution	1 sachet in 200 mL water.	1 sachet in 200 mL water.	Make up in water to produce 1 L solution	Make up in water to produce 1 L solution	2 tablets in 200 mL water
Glucose	3.56g	Glucose free, (contains 6g pre-cooked rice powder)	20g (4g in 200 mL)	22g (4.4g in 200 mL)	3.27g
Sodium chloride	0.47g	0.35g	3.5g (0.7g in 200 mL)	3.5g (0.7g in 200 mL)	0.292g
Potassium chloride	0.3g	0.3g	-	-	0.372g
Citrate salt	0.53g (disodium hydrogen)	0.58g (sodium)	-	2.9g (sodium) (0.58g in 200 mL)	Quantity not specified
Sodium bicarbonate	-	-	2.5g (0.5g in 200 mL)		0.293 g per tablet (0.586g in 200 mL)
Artificial sweetener	Saccharin	Aspartame	X	X	Sucralose (20 mg per tablet for strawberry and blackcurrant flavour and 8mg per tablet for lemon flavour)

*Individual components can also be purchased OTC to make up solution (see link to SPS document below)

Guidance on ordering O.R.S Hydration tablets®

- O.R.S Hydration tablets®, can be ordered from a number of national wholesalers including (please note there may be other wholesalers that can also source supplies)
 - AAH Pharmaceuticals
 - Sigma Pharmaceuticals
 - Alloga UK

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

- The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source St Mark's solution
 - BCM Limited
 - Lexon Pharmacy
 - Nova Laboratories
 - 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)

Links

- [Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - Dioralyte](#)
- [Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - Dioralyte Relief](#)
- [O.R.S Hydration tablets](#) (scroll to bottom of webpage for links to nutrition information and FAQs)
- [SPS: What is St Mark's Electrolyte Mix \(solution\)?](#)
- [RCT: Effect of dilute apple juice and preferred fluids vs electrolyte maintenance solution on treatment failure among children with mild gastroenteritis](#)

Enquiries

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