

General Practitioners
Community Pharmacists
Primary Care Pharmacists
Secondary Care Pharmacists
Secondary Care Consultants and Community
Paediatricians
Child & Adolescent Gastrointestinal Consultants

Date 20 November 2019
Your Ref
Our Ref RapidResponse/ranitidine
Enquiries to Medicines Management Team
Extension 88510
Direct Line 0131 537 8510
Email prescribing@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Dear Colleagues,

Prescribing anti-acid medicines for children when ranitidine preparations are not available

Several ranitidine products have been recalled by manufacturers as a precautionary measure due to possible contamination with an impurity N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) which has genotoxic and carcinogenic potential. This is an ongoing issue and the MHRA is actively involved with the European Medicines Agency and with other medicines regulators to determine any possible impact.^{1,2} Dr Peter Gillett, Consultant Gastroenterologist, RHSC and David Hoole, Senior Pharmacist, RHSC have written pragmatic guidance to support prescribers and pharmacists in both primary and secondary care for paediatrics. This guidance is attached and will also be available on the Lothian Joint Formulary website here [[link](#)].

Key messages

- Paediatric patients receiving ranitidine should be assessed at the next convenient opportunity or when a repeat prescription is requested in primary or secondary care.
- Currently, the MHRA do not require patients to stop taking their medication immediately and hence conversion to other medicines may be carried out in a controlled manner.
- It should be noted that unlicensed omeprazole suspension is not approved for use in NHS Lothian. These products are not considered by local specialists to be a suitable alternative to ranitidine.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Browning
Lead Pharmacist, Medicines Management Team

References

1. Drug alerts. Letters to Healthcare Professionals regarding recalls of ranitidine products. 2019. The Scottish Government. www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk
2. Alerts and recalls for drugs and medical devices. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). www.gov.uk/drug-device-alerts