



3 August 2021

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Catapres® (clonidine) 100microgram tablets

Priority: Level 2*
Valid until: w/c 4th October 2021

Issue

1. Very limited supplies of Catapres® (clonidine) 100microgram tablets are available until w/c 4th October 2021.
2. Clonidine 25 microgram tablets remain available and able to support a full increase in demand.
3. Clonidine 50 microgram /5ml oral solution sugar free remain available and able to support a full increase in demand.
4. The above preparations have different licensed indications (management of migraine or recurrent vascular headache and management of vasomotor conditions commonly associated with the menopause and characterised by flushing) to Catapres® 100 microgram tablets (see additional information below).
5. Unlicensed imports of clonidine 100 microgram tablets can be sourced. Lead times vary.

Advice and Actions

For patients with insufficient supplies until the re-supply date, clinicians should consider the following options:

- prescribe clonidine 25 microgram tablets and counsel patients on the equivalent number of tablets required (see additional information below); or
- prescribe clonidine 50 microgram /5ml oral solution sugar-free and counsel patients on the equivalent volume of liquid required (see additional information below); or
- consider prescribing unlicensed imports (see additional information below).

Additional Information

6. Clonidine alternative preparations:
 - Catapres® (clonidine) 100 microgram tablets are licensed for the treatment of all grades of essential and secondary hypertension. Initial treatment dose is 50 - 100 micrograms three times daily, which is increased gradually, with most patients controlled on divided daily doses of 300 - 1200 micrograms.
 - Despite difference in licensed indication(s), there are no known differences in bioavailability between clonidine 25 microgram tablets or clonidine 50 microgram /5ml oral solution sugar free and Catapres® 100 microgram tablets, and they can be considered interchangeable.

- When switching patients to clonidine 25 microgram tablets or clonidine 50 microgram /5ml oral solution sugar free, clinicians should consider the quantity of tablets or volume of liquid required to deliver the equivalent dose and check patient's understanding (see Table 1).
- For patients prescribed a high dose of clonidine, prescribers should work with local pharmacies to establish availability of clonidine 100 microgram tablets for the period of the shortage and signpost patients accordingly.

Table 1: Clonidine 100 microgram tablets equivalent conversion

Preparation	Equivalent dose to clonidine 100 microgram
Clonidine 25 microgram tablets	4 tablets
Clonidine 50 microgram / 5ml oral solution sugar-free	10ml

7. Please refer to the BNF and SPCs below for further information:

- [Clonidine hydrochloride BNF](#)
- [Clonidine 25mcg tablets](#)
- [Clonidine 50mcg/5ml oral solution sugar free](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

8. The following specialist importers have currently confirmed they can source unlicensed clonidine 100 microgram tablets (please note, there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

- Alium Medical
- Mawdsleys
- Target Healthcare
- UL Global Pharma

9. Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Board 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)

Enquiries

10. Enquiries from Health Boards or healthcare professionals should be directed in the first instance to PharmacyTeam@gov.scot (primary care) or NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot (secondary care).