



5 August 2024

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: w/c 16th September

Issue

1. Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules are out of stock from early August until w/c 16th September 2024.
2. Unlicensed imports of desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules have been sourced, lead times vary.

Advice and Actions

3. In primary care, clinicians should:
 - identify all patients prescribed DDAVP® 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection and check if they have sufficient supplies until the resupply date;
 - for patients with insufficient supplies, liaise with pharmacy teams to confirm local stock holdings. Where there is insufficient licensed stock available, pharmacy teams should place orders for unlicensed imports of desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection (see additional information below); or
 - if unlicensed imports cannot be sourced in time, or are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on alternative management options.
4. Health Board pharmacy procurement teams should work with appropriate clinical leads to:
 - review current stockholding to identify if there is sufficient stock to cover the out of stock period.
 - If necessary, place urgent orders for unlicensed desmopressin 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection (see additional information below); and where there is an urgent need:
 - consider mutual aid where necessary.
 - if the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on alternative management options.

Additional Information

Clinical Information (see BNF for detailed information)

*<https://www.nss.nhs.scot/media/1842/medicine-supply-alert-notice-definitions-of-classifications-21-october-2019.pdf>

5. Desmopressin (DDAVP®) 4 micrograms/1ml injection is licensed for:
- the diagnosis and treatment of cranial diabetes insipidus (adult treatment dose 1 to 4 micrograms once daily; children and infant doses from 0.4 micrograms, by SC, IM or IV injection);
 - increasing Factor VIII:C and Factor VIII:Ag in patients with mild to moderate haemophilia or von Willebrand's disease undergoing surgery or following trauma (0.4 micrograms per kg by IV infusion)
6. It also has a licence for establishing renal concentration capacity, treating headache resulting from a lumbar puncture, and testing fibrinolytic response.

National Patient Safety Alert on risk to patients with cranial diabetes insipidus when desmopressin is omitted or delayed

7. Desmopressin is considered a life sustaining medication when used to treat cranial diabetes insipidus. It is most commonly administered as a nasal spray or oral tablets, but may also be given as an injection, which is useful in the treatment of acutely unwell or fasting patients. The dose of desmopressin is different depending on the indication for use and formulation. An Alert issued in 2016 highlighted reports to the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) of dosing errors with resulting patient harm, and several incidents where omission of desmopressin resulted in severe dehydration and death. The main themes from reported incidents of desmopressin omission, included: a lack of awareness of the critical nature of desmopressin amongst medical, pharmacy and nursing staff; and poor availability of desmopressin within inpatient clinical areas where it was often not kept as a stock item.

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

8. The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed desmopressin 4micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules and vials (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
- BAP Pharma
 - Mawdsleys
 - Qmed Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
 - Smartway
9. Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and Health Board or local governance procedures. Unlicensed imports do not undergo any central quality assessment or suitability evaluation. Therefore, any import must be locally assessed in line with local unlicensed medicines processes. 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 to further information

- [BNF: Desmopressin](#)
- [SmPC DDAVP/desmopressin injection](#)
- [Society for Endocrinology Clinical Guidance: Inpatient management of cranial diabetes insipidus](#)
- [WFH guidelines for the management of haemophilia](#)
- [NHSE Patient Safety Alert \(2016\): Risk of severe harm or death when desmopressin is omitted or delayed inpatients with cranial diabetes insipidus](#)

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

10. The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in conjunction with SPS have launched an online Medicines Supply Tool, which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. To access the online Medicines Supply Tool you need to register with the [SPS website](#). Registration for access to the website is available to UK healthcare professionals and organisations providing NHS healthcare. The tool is located under the Tools tab and then click on the Medicines Supply option.
11. We encourage prescribers, pharmacy professionals, and pharmacy procurement leads in Scotland to register with the SPS website and use its Medicine Supply Tool to stay up to date concerning medicines supply disruptions. Please be aware that while medicines supply issues will appear on the SPS website, some of the recommended actions may not always be appropriate / relevant within the Scottish context.

Enquiries

12. 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).