

26 March 2025

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: early September 2025

Issue

1. Desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray is out of stock with an anticipated re-supply date of early September 2025.
2. Unlicensed supplies of desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray are available, lead times may vary.
3. Desmopressin 100 and 200microgram tablets, desmopressin sublingual tablets and DDAVP Melt oral lyophilisates (60, 120 and 240microgram) remain available and can support an increase in demand (see Additional information section).
4. Desmopressin 4microgram/ml injection is available and can support an increase in demand (see Additional information section).

Advice and Actions

5. Where patients have insufficient supply of desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray until the resupply date, clinicians should:
 - consider prescribing unlicensed imports of desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray (see Additional information section); or
 - if the above option cannot be sourced in time or is not considered suitable, prescribe an equivalent dose of an oral desmopressin product, ensuring patients are counselled on the change in formulation, and dosage (see Additional information section); and
 - If the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on an alternative management option.
6. The switch from the nasal to an oral formulation should be overseen by the endocrinology team.

Additional Information

7. Desmopressin is a synthetic form of Antidiuretic Hormone (ADH) used to treat cranial diabetes insipidus (Arginine Vasopressin Deficiency, AVP-D) and is considered a life sustaining medication in this situation. A [patient safety alert](#) was issued by NHS England in 2016 to raise awareness of the risk of severe dehydration and death caused by an omission or delay of

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

desmopressin in patients with cranial diabetes insipidus. 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.

8. Desmopressin nasal spray is licensed for the treatment of vasopressin-sensitive central diabetes insipidus and as a diagnostic test of the renal concentrating capacity.

Dose of desmopressin preparations for diabetes insipidus

	Nasal spray	Tablet*	Oral lyophilisate/ sublingual*
Dose	10 to 20 micrograms daily. In cases of insufficient efficacy dose can be increased on a case-by-case basis up to 40 micrograms in adults divided into 2 doses of 20 micrograms, and to 20 micrograms in children and adolescents (<18 years) divided into 2 doses of 10 micrograms	Starting dose in adults and children is 100 micrograms three times daily, adjusted in accordance with patient's response. For majority, maintenance dose is 100 to 200 micrograms three times daily	Starting dose in adults and children is 60 micrograms three times daily, adjusted in accordance with patient's response. For majority, maintenance dose is 60 to 120 micrograms three times daily.

*As not all oral desmopressin products are licensed for diabetes insipidus, and they may differ in excipients, individual SmPCs should be consulted.

Switching between desmopressin products

9. Individual dose titration based on patient's response is required as intranasal desmopressin is more potent than oral formulations and differs in dosing interval. Selection of a dose should be determined by the endocrinology team.

Desmopressin Injection

10. This is licensed to establish renal concentration capacity.

Links to further information

- [SmPC Desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray](#)
- [SmPC Desmopressin oral lyophilisates](#)
- [SmPC Desmopressin 100microgram tablets](#)
- [SmPC Desmopressin 200microgram tablets](#)
- [SmPC Desmopressin sublingual tablets](#)
- [SmPC Desmopressin injection BNF Desmopressin](#)
- [NHSE Patient Safety Alert: Risk of severe harm or death when desmopressin is omitted or delayed in patients with cranial diabetes insipidus](#)
- [Arginine Vasopressin Deficiency \(Diabetes Insipidus\) | Society for Endocrinology.](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

11. The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
- Alium medical
 - Durbin
 - Genetech
 - Mawdsleys
12. Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS 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.
- [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).

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

13. 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.
14. 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

15. 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).