



18 June 2025

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Venlafaxine 37.5mg modified release tablets

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: mid-July 2025

Issue

1. Venlafaxine 37.5mg modified release (MR) tablets are out of stock until mid-July 2025.
2. Venlafaxine 37.5mg MR capsules remain available and can support increased demand.
3. Venlafaxine 37.5mg immediate release (IR) tablets remain available and can support increased demand.
4. Venlafaxine 37.5mg/5ml and 75mg/5ml oral solution remains available and can both support a partial increase in demand.

Advice and Actions

5. Prescribers should not initiate new patients on venlafaxine 37.5mg MR tablets until the shortage has resolved.
6. Where patients have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, prescribers should:
 - ensure the shortage does not lead to abrupt cessation of venlafaxine treatment; and
 - consider prescribing venlafaxine 37.5mg **MR capsules**, ensuring that the patient is not intolerant to any of the excipients and is counselled on the change in formulation.
7. If the patient does not wish to take MR capsules due to the gelatin content, review the patient's dose to determine if the patient is on the appropriate dose, and consider prescribing venlafaxine **IR tablets** if appropriate (see additional information section), noting that this may be off-label for some indications, and ensuring:
 - no intolerance to excipients or issues adhering to a twice daily dosing regimen, and
 - patients are counselled on the change in formulation and dosing regimen, and to report any adverse effects or change in treatment efficacy.
8. If dose of venlafaxine cannot be provided by IR tablets, consider prescribing venlafaxine **oral solution**, if appropriate (see additional information section), taking into account the same considerations as for use of IR tablets.
9. If the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on management options.

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

Additional Information

10. Licensed daily doses of venlafaxine vary between indications and range from 37.5mg to 375mg. Only the modified release formulations are licensed to treat anxiety disorders.
11. Venlafaxine is associated with a higher risk of withdrawal effects (for example, gastrointestinal disturbances, headache, anxiety, dizziness) than other antidepressants. Treatment should not be stopped abruptly.

Table 1 –Venlafaxine formulations

Formulation	Licensed indications	Dose frequency*	Comments
MR tablet MR capsule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment of major depressive episodes, generalised anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, and panic disorder, with or without agoraphobia.• Prevention of recurrence of major depressive episodes.	Once a day	A small cohort of patients may not wish to switch to venlafaxine MR capsules for cultural or religious reasons, as the capsules contain gelatin.
IR tablet Oral solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment of major depressive episodes.• Prevention of recurrence of major depressive episodes.	Twice a day	<p>When switching from an MR to IR preparation, the total daily dose is the same but it is administered in two divided doses.</p> <p>Venlafaxine oral solution contains some excipients which are associated with cautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sodium methyl and sodium ethyl parahydroxybenzoate (E219 and E215) – may cause allergic reactions (possibly delayed)• Liquid maltitol – patients with rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance should not take this medicine <p>To reduce the risk of confusion and dosing/administration errors, prescribers should not switch between the two different strengths of oral solution.</p>

Links for information

- [BNF Venlafaxine](#)
- [SmPC Venlafaxine 37.5mg prolonged release tablets](#)
- [SmPC Venlafaxine 37.5mg prolonged release capsules](#)
- [SmPC Venlafaxine 37.5 mg tablets](#)
- [SmPC Venlafaxine 37.5mg/5ml Oral Solution](#)
- [SmPC Venlafaxine 75mg/5ml Oral Solution](#)

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

12. The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in conjunction with the Specialist Pharmacy Service (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.
13. 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

14. 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).