



8 July 2025

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets sugar free

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: mid-October 2025

Issue

1. Betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets are out of stock until late July 2025, when a limited resupply is expected; full resupply is anticipated mid-October 2025.
2. Alternative soluble oral corticosteroids remain available and can support increased demand.
3. Alternative treatment options remain available that may be utilised off-label as a mouthwash, at the discretion of the prescriber.

Advice and Actions

4. Prescribers should not initiate new individuals on betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets until the supply issue has fully resolved, and:
 - where individuals using the tablets to make up a mouthwash (Note: this is off-label use) have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, consider prescribing: [prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets](#) or [fluticasone 400microgram nasules](#) (Note: this is also off-label use). Prescribers should explain how to use these preparations as a mouthwash and provide them with the patient information leaflet (see Additional information section);
 - if the above options are not considered suitable, advice should be sought from specialist oral medical team.
5. Note that the above mentioned alternative treatment options ([prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets](#) and [fluticasone 400microgram nasules](#)) are not included in the Dental Practitioners Formulary, which only lists betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets. Dentists should work with primary and secondary care prescribers to ensure individuals can access the alternative treatment options not included in the Dental Practitioner Formulary, as these will need prescribing by another prescriber, other than a dentist.
6. If there is any use systemically, patients should be reviewed and another oral corticosteroid prescribed, ensuring that the patient is counselled on the appropriate dose, and is not intolerant to any of the excipients.

Additional Information

Clinical Information

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

7. Betamethasone soluble tablets are licensed for a range of systemic conditions that require corticosteroid therapy (including respiratory, rheumatology, dermatology, renal, gastroenterology, and haematology/oncology indications).
8. Betamethasone tablets may be used topically (e.g. as mouthwash) to treat oral ulceration (Note: this is off-label use). Mouthwashes are useful for treating large areas of the mouth, and lesions which cannot be easily accessed by ointments or sprays.

Links to further information

- [SmPC Betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets](#)
- [SmPC Prednisolone 5mg Soluble Tablets](#)
- [SmPC Dexamethasone soluble tablets](#)
- [SmPC Dexamethasone oral solution](#)
- [BNF Betamethasone](#)
- [BNF Oral ulceration and inflammation - Treatment summary](#)
- [BNF Corticosteroids, general use - Treatment summary](#)
- [BNF Corticosteroids, inflammatory disorders - Treatment summary](#)
- [Patient Information - British & Irish Society for Oral Medicine](#)
- [Dental Practitioners' Formulary | BNF | NICE](#)

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

9. 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.
10. 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

11. 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).