

Patient Information Leaflet

Switching from mesalazine modified release (MR) 400mg or 800mg tablets to Octasa[®] modified release 400mg or 800mg tablets

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is responsible for managing the medicines budget for all the doctors in the area. It is important that we make the best use of the money available to spend on medicines without reducing the quality of treatment patients receive.

Why has my medicine changed?

Your medicine has not actually changed, only the brand name and packaging have altered. The tablets are the same colour, shape and size and contain the same active ingredient as Asacol[®] 400mg and 800mg MR tablets.

Why have I been prescribed a different brand?

When a new medicine is developed, one company manufactures the medicine with a patent license. When the patent expires, other companies are allowed to manufacture the same product under different names. These new medicines contain the same active ingredient, are manufactured to the same high standards and are a more cost effective option for doctors to prescribe. There are several brands available. HSCB has chosen Octasa[®] tablets as its cost-effective brand of choice. The decision to change this across Northern Ireland has been discussed with gastroenterology and surgical hospital consultants who support making the best use of resources and do not feel this change will disadvantage you.

Will this new brand work in the same way?

Yes, Octasa[®] tablets work in exactly the same way as other mesalazine MR 400mg or 800mg tablets. You will use the same dose and quantity that you currently use. Please use up remaining supplies of your current tablets before starting your next repeat prescription.

What will they look like?

To help you to identify your new tablets, pictures of the tablets and their packaging are shown. The tablets are red-brown and oblong.

What to do if you have concerns:

If you are worried about the change in medication please discuss this with either your GP or (ideally) your hospital Inflammatory Bowel Disease team. If your consultant has concerns or the change is not felt to be appropriate they can advise your GP but, as stated, this should have no impact on you.

Examples

