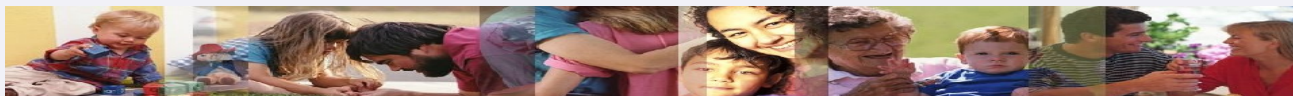


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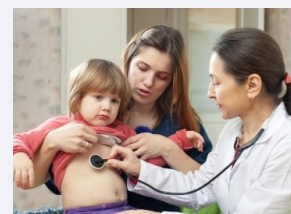
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Amoxicillin Dosing in Children

In 2014, UK dosage recommendations for the prescribing of amoxicillin in children were increased. This brought dosages for amoxicillin in children into line with the rest of Europe, and addressed concerns that children had been receiving sub-therapeutic dosages. The current dosages for amoxicillin are shown in the table below.

Electronic versions of the BNF-C and GP clinical systems have since been updated to reflect this change; printed copies of the BNFC were updated from the July 2014-July 2015 edition onwards.



However, local hospital paediatric units have reported that some children are still being admitted on sub-therapeutic dosages of amoxicillin started in primary care.

Amoxicillin dosages in children

- Neonate:** 7–28 days 30mg/kg (max.125mg) 3 times daily
- Child 1 month–1 year:** 125mg 3 times daily; increased if necessary up to 30mg/kg 3 times daily
- Child 1–5 years:** 250mg 3 times daily; increased if necessary up to 30mg/kg 3 times daily
- Child 5–12 years:** 500mg 3 times daily; increased if necessary up to 30mg/kg (max.1g) 3 times daily
- Child 12–18 years:** 500mg 3 times daily; in severe infection 1g 3 times daily

Action

- Please ensure that the most up to date references are used when prescribing and dispensing medicines.
- Refer to the Northern Ireland Formulary website for up to date dosages and medicine choices <http://niformulary.hscni.net>.
- *The Northern Ireland Management of Infection Guidelines for Primary Care* are also available as a Smartphone/Tablet app. Download the free MICROGUIDE app via the App Store or Google Play and select 'Northern Ireland Primary Care' when prompted for trust.



<http://kaywa.me/T1hzB>



<http://kaywa.me/7leWs>

Note: pack sizes

We want to remind all prescribers that amoxicillin 125mg/5ml oral suspension and amoxicillin 250mg/5ml oral suspension are only produced in **100ml pack sizes**. Therefore, for children over 5 years of age, a 5 day course requires the prescribing of **2 bottles** (200ml). The dosing directions should **specify the duration of the treatment** along with the dosing directions, i.e. 10ml 250mg/5ml oral suspension three times a day for 5 days. For children over 5 years, a 7 day course requires the prescribing of **3 bottles** (300ml). Again, the dosing directions should specify the duration of the treatment along with the dosing directions, i.e. 10ml 250mg/5ml oral suspension three times a day for 7 days.

Similar situations occur with **all** liquid antibiotics preparations so we would ask all prescribers to:

- Familiarise themselves with the pack sizes of liquid antibiotics
- Consider appropriate duration of antibiotics (see <http://niformulary.hscni.net>)
- Ensure that the patient is aware of the prescribed duration of treatment.

Pregabalin — Prescribe Generically

The patent for Lyrica® (pregabalin) expired in July 2017. Therefore, in line with current Department of Health generic prescribing policy, **pregabalin should be prescribed generically in all appropriate circumstances.**

There may be a small number of patients receiving pregabalin for the treatment of epilepsy. In these cases, [MHRA guidance](#) on switching between different manufacturers' products for a particular drug should be followed.

Switching all branded pregabalin prescriptions to generic pregabalin would release annual savings of approximately £2.3 million.

Action for GP practices:

- Search for patients prescribed pregabalin by brand name and switch to generic pregabalin where appropriate.

Action for Community Pharmacies:

- Provide patients with sufficient counselling to ensure the safe and effective use of medicines. Confusion regarding dispensed generic medicines is a particular risk. Refer to the HSCB letter on Patient Counselling and Generic Medicines on Medicines Governance website for further advice www.medicinesgovernance.hscni.net.

Cost comparison of pregabalin (generic) and Lyrica®		
Strength	Pregabalin (generic)	Lyrica®
25mg capsules x 56	£1.84	£64.40
50mg capsules x 84	£1.91	£96.60
75mg capsules x 56	£1.81	£64.40
100mg capsules x 84	£2.43	£96.60
150mg capsules x 56	£2.17	£64.40
200mg capsules x 84	£2.93	£96.60
225mg capsules x 56	£2.74	£64.40
Prices as per Drug Tariff , Oct 2017 and mims.co.uk		

Note of caution:

Prescribers should be aware that whilst pregabalin has many potential benefits, there is also a [risk of dependence](#). In addition, pregabalin has the potential to be misused or diverted. Practices should have procedures in place to ensure all patients prescribed pregabalin are reviewed regularly and pregabalin is prescribed appropriately.

NICE GUIDANCE — NORTHERN IRELAND SERVICE NOTIFICATIONS

Service Notifications have been issued in Northern Ireland for the following:

[NICE TA445](#) — Certolizumab pegol and secukinumab for treating active psoriatic arthritis after inadequate response to DMARDs.

MANAGED ENTRY DECISIONS

The following medicines were considered in October as part of the Northern Ireland Managed Entry process. **Please refer to the Managed Entry section of the Northern Ireland Formulary website for full details on Managed Entry decisions:** <http://niformulary.hscni.net/ManagedEntry/MEDecisions/Pages/default.aspx>

5-aminolevulinic acid gel (Ameluz®)
 Canakinumab (Ilaris®)
 Inotuzumab ozogamicin (Besponsa®)
 Magnesium glycerophosphate (Neomag®)
 Rolapitant (Varuby®)
 Adalimumab (Humira®) and dexamethasone intravitreal implant (Ozurdex®)
 Roflumilast (Daxas®)

Cetuximab (Erbix®)
 Paclitaxel, albumin-bound (Abraxane®)
 Dimethyl fumarate (Skilarence®)
 Sorafenib (Nexavar®)
 Brentuximab (Adcetris®)
 Immunosuppressive Therapy in Adults (Various recommendations)
 Immunosuppressive Therapy in Children and Young People (Various recommendations)

This newsletter has been produced for GPs and pharmacists by the Regional Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team. If you have any queries or require further information on the contents of this newsletter, please contact one of the Pharmacy Advisors in your local HSCB office:

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