

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 32

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1. NICE guidelines: Human and animal bites: antimicrobial prescribing (NG184). November 2020 ([Link](#))

This guideline sets out an antimicrobial prescribing strategy for human and animal bites (excluding insect bites) in adults, young people and children aged 72 hours and over. It aims to optimise antibiotic use and reduce antibiotic resistance.

For local advice, please refer to South Central Antimicrobial Network (SCAN) guidelines. These are now available on the MicroGuide app. See previous bulletin 24 for information on how to download the app. Guidance is also available via the SCAN website. ([Link](#))

2. SPS Advice: What injections can be given orally or via enteral feeding tubes? November 2020 ([Link](#))

Not all enteral feeding tubes are the same. Common types include nasogastric, nasojejunal, nasoduodenal, percutaneous gastrostomy, percutaneous jejunostomy and percutaneous gastrojejunostomy. Factors which may affect drug delivery include the size, placement, and function of the tube, as well as drug factors such as formulation and alternative administration route. This is a quick reference summary to different types of enteral feeding tubes, in relation to medication issues.

3. COVID-19 prescribing briefing: corticosteroids

Dexamethasone or hydrocortisone should be offered to people with **severe or critical COVID-19** (in line with updated WHO guidance); that is, people with any of the following:

- Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS)
- Sepsis or septic shock

- Other conditions that would normally need life-sustaining therapies such as ventilation or vasopressor therapy
- Signs of severe respiratory distress
- Oxygen saturation <90% (or deteriorating) on room air
- Increased respiratory rate (>30 breaths per minute in adults and children over 5 years).

Corticosteroids should not normally be used in people with COVID-19 that is not severe or critical, because there is the possibility of harm to such people.

A recent letter from NHS England and NHS Improvement also outlines the advice above. ([Link](#))

Please see the NICE guidelines: COVID-19 rapid guideline: critical care in adults for further advice and information. ([Link](#))

4. Anticipatory Medications Template

The Anticipatory Medications Template is now available on EMIS and SystemONE. The attachment outlines the Anticipatory Medications Dose Calculation Worksheets to sit alongside the Future Planning Template and SHFT/Solent Community Syringe Driver and PRN Administration Order sheets.



Anticipatory
Medications Template

5. Ordering medication using proxy access: Guidance for care homes, GP practices and community pharmacies

NHS England have produced guidance to support best practice for CQC registered care homes and GP practices and pharmacists to work together to allow care home staff to order online repeat medication on behalf of residents (proxy access). This can be accessed on the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/clinical-policy/ordering-medication-using-proxy-access/>

For further advice please discuss with your CCG medicines optimisation team.

6. MHRA drug safety update: Modafinil (Provigil): increased risk of congenital malformations if used during pregnancy. 16 November 2020. ([Link](#))

Advice for healthcare professionals is:

- Modafinil potentially increases the risk of congenital malformations (including congenital heart defects, hypospadias, and orofacial clefts); modafinil should not be used in pregnancy and alternative treatment options for narcolepsy should be considered.
- Women of childbearing potential must use effective contraception during treatment and for 2 months after stopping modafinil.
- Modafinil may reduce the effectiveness of steroidal contraceptives, including oral contraceptives, therefore alternative or concomitant methods of contraception are required.
- Ensure all female patients of childbearing potential taking modafinil are informed and fully understand that:
 - Modafinil should not be used during pregnancy due to the increased risk to the fetus
 - Effective contraception is needed during treatment with modafinil and for 2 months after stopping modafinil treatment
 - They should discuss plans for pregnancy early with their doctor and continue contraception for 2 months after stopping modafinil
- Report any suspected adverse reactions experienced by a woman or child associated with medicines taken during pregnancy via the Yellow Card Scheme

7. Royal College of Psychiatrists Patient Resource: Stopping Antidepressants

A new patient resource is available from the Royal College of Psychiatrists which has been approved for sharing by Southern Health Foundation Trust. The resource aids stopping antidepressants and is designed to provide patients with information whilst still directing them to speak to their clinician before stopping treatment. The patient resources are available at:

www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health/treatments-and-wellbeing/stopping-antidepressants

This guidance is in line with NICE guidance ([Link](#)) and discusses longer duration of withdrawal, symptoms on stopping antidepressants and how this can differ between antidepressants.

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Previous bulletins can be found at:

<https://gp-portal.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/medicines/covid-19-medicines-information/covid-19-medicines-optimisation-bulletins/>