



Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists
NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG



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- **Antiepileptic drugs: new advice on switching between different manufacturers' products**

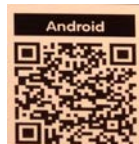
The latest MHRA Drug Safety update provides advice on switching between branded and generic versions of anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs). It advises that different AEDs vary considerably in their characteristics, which influences the risk of whether switching between different manufacturers' products of a particular drug may cause adverse effects or loss of seizure control. AEDs have been divided into three risk-based categories to help healthcare professionals decide whether it is necessary to maintain continuity of supply of a specific manufacturer's product. <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Safetyinformation/DrugSafetyUpdate/CON336716>

- **Supply problem with Spiriva (tiotropium) refill packs**

Spiriva refill packs are currently unavailable from the manufacturer with no expected supply date as yet. Some pharmacies may have limited supplies in stock but once these are exhausted we advise prescribers to prescribe as acute issues of Spiriva Combipacks until the refill stocks are available again.

- **Medicines Management section on GPi App**

A medicines management section has been added to the GPi app. It contains contacts for the CCGs' medicines management team and a link to PathfinderRF. The app is available for iOS (via the Apple app store) and Android (via the Google Play store). Alternatively use this QR codes below



- **Frontline healthcare worker? Had your flu vaccination? No? Why not?**

The latest addition of Vaccine Update highlights that "getting yourself protected against flu is your responsibility, not only to protect yourself and your patients but also your family, friends and colleagues. If you work in a residential or nursing home, or anywhere where you are in close contact with patients, getting flu not only means having to take time off work but you also run the risk of infecting the vulnerable people you are meant to be caring for – so not only will they will be ill, you won't be there to look after them."

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262085/vaccine_update_209_v16.pdf

- **Immunisation Queries**

Fiona Anaman is the Immunisation Co-ordinator for the Hertfordshire and South Midlands Area Team and works mainly with practices in Northants and Milton Keynes. She is the most appropriate person to contact in the first instance if you have any immunisation enquiries. She can be contacted on 01604 651668 (except Wednesdays - 01707 367286) or e-mail f.anaman@nhs.net. Alternatively contact specialist immunisation nurses and doctors at PHE on 0300 303 8537 (urgent queries) or smh@phe.gov.uk (non-urgent queries) Mon-Fri, 09:00-17:00.

- **Public Health England issues advice to help people take care of themselves during the flu season.**

Public Health England (PHE) and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) have produced advice for the public regarding the symptoms, duration and appropriate treatment of sore throats, runny noses, ear ache, colds and flu-like illness. They advise that these can usually be managed using over-the-counter medicines and don't need antibiotics.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/surviving-the-cold-and-flu-season-without-antibiotics>

- **Acute cough – public expectation of symptom duration differs from published evidence**

A systematic review of observational studies and RCTs supports NICE guidance that, on average, acute cough lasts for around 3 weeks. However, a survey of adults in the USA shows that public expectation is that acute cough should only last for about 7 to 9 days. While acute cough can indicate serious illness in some groups, for most people it is self-limiting. In line with NICE guidance, giving advice about the usual natural history and average total length of the illness may provide some reassurance to patients and prevent unnecessary consultations and subsequent prescribing of antibiotics.

<http://www.evidence.nhs.uk/search?q=%27Acute+cough+%E2%80%93+public+expectation+of+symptom+duration+differs+from+published+evidence%27>

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link <http://nww.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene> and on the Nene CCG and Corby CCG websites

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