There is currently a shortage of all immediate release isosorbide mononitrate 10mg, 20mg and 40mg tablets due to problems with the availability of raw materials. At present, this shortage is expected to last until May/June 2013.

We have reached agreement with the local Cardiologists and the hospital pharmacy that the most clinically effective, cost effective and least confusing option to patients would be to convert their immediate release tablets to the nearest modified release (MR) tablet formulation available.

There are no published comparative studies on dose-equivalence between “asymmetric dosing” using immediate release tablets and “daily dosing” using MR tablets. However, they have similar bioavailability [93-100% for immediate release tablets and 80-100% for MR tablets 1]. Therefore a 1:1 dose conversion can be assumed in theory. However, due to the available formulations, a direct 1:1 dose conversion may not be possible in all cases. Patients will be converted to the nearest available MR tablet dose and the dose may need to be adjusted according to clinical response. This is also the approach recommended by the Department of Health 2.

**First line formulation:**

All patients will be switched to Chemydur XL 60mg tablets or Monomil XL 60mg tablets which are the most cost effective MR tablets. They are both scored and licensed to be halved. We are recommending branded prescribing as these two products are much less expensive than the generic equivalent.

**Second line formulation (Restricted use):**

Elantan LA 25mg and 50mg capsules are the most cost effective MR capsule formulations. These will be available for use only in patients who have problems halving the tablets e.g. dexterity issues.

**Table: Suggested dose conversion guidance**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Current dose of             immediate release tablets** | **Suggested dose of MR tablets (Chemydur XL or Monomil XL)** | **Alternative MR capsules           only for patients with problems halving tablets** |
| **10mg BD** | **30mg OD every morning** (HALF 60mg MR Tablet) | **25mg OD every morning** |
| **20mg BD** | **60mg OD every morning** (ONE 60mg MR Tablet) | **-** |
| **30mg BD** | **60mg OD every morning** (ONE 60mg MR Tablet) | **-** |
| **40mg BD** | **90mg OD every morning**(ONE and a HALF 60mg MR Tablets) | **100mg OD every morning** |

As these products are more expensive than the immediate release tablets, we will recommend a switch back once the supply of isosorbide mononitrate returns to normal. Please ensure that your patients are aware that this is a temporary switch to their medicine.

Further information can be found in the summary of product characteristics of Chemydur 60XL, Monomil XL 60, Elantan LA25, Elantan LA50 via <http://www.medicines.org.uk/EMC/>  or contact the Pharmaceutical Advisers.

**References:**

1. DRUGDEX® Evaluations; Isosorbide Mononitrate (Last modified January 2013)
2. Department of Health. Gateway reference:18679. 19th  February 2013.

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