Medication Safety Notice

Issued by the Office of the Chief Pharmacist, SA Health
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/medicationsafety

A medication **Safety Notice** strongly advises the implementation of particular recommendations or solutions to improve quality and safety.

We recommend you inform:

- General Managers
- Pharmacy Directors
- Medical Directors
- Clinical Directors
- Nursing Directors
- Drug and Therapeutics Committees
- Medication Safety Committees
- Safety and Quality Units
- Clinical Governance

Contact details:

T: (08) 8204 1944
E: HealthMedicationSafety @sa.gov.au

Government of South Australia
SA Health

Suxamethonium injection: Succinolin® Safety Considerations

Purpose

> To highlight a shortage of the Australian registered product of suxamethonium injection and safety considerations when using section 19A approved alternatives.

Background

> Suxamethonium is a depolarising neuromuscular blocking agent used in anaesthesia and intensive care. The Australian registered product of suxamethonium injection (AstraZeneca® Suxamethonium Chloride) is in shortage and currently unavailable.

> The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has approved two internationally registered products (Succinolin® and Mercury Pharma® brands) for use in Australia, under section 19A of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.

Succinolin® considerations

> Succinolin® brand contains 100mg/2mL of suxamethonium chloride **anhydrous**, a different salt to that in the Australian product which contains suxamethonium chloride.

> Succinolin® contains the **equivalent of 110mg/2ml of suxamethonium chloride,** 10% more suxamethonium than the Australian product. This difference is not readily apparent from the product packaging.

> The Succinolin® injection pack is labelled as 50mg/mL. Without due care this may be misinterpreted as the total amount of suxamethonium in the 2mL ampoule.

> The primary packaging of the Succinolin® product is not in English.

> The stability of both Section 19A approved products when not refrigerated is shorter.

Brand	Succinolin®	Mercury Pharma®	AstraZeneca®
Registration status	Section 19A	Section 19A	Australian approved
Active ingredient	suxamethonium chloride **anhydrous**	suxamethonium chloride	suxamethonium chloride
Labelled strength	50mg/mL suxamethonii chloridum anhydricum	50mg/mL suxamethonium chloride	100mg/2mL suxamethonium chloride
Equivalent strength of suxamethonium chloride	**110mg/2mL**	**100mg/2mL**	**100mg/2mL**
Storage	Refrigerate. Stable above 8° for **up to 48 hours.**	Refrigerate. Stable above 8° for up to **14 days** in original outer carton.	Refrigerate. Stable above 8° for **1 month.**

August 2020

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Succinolin®

(suxamethonium chloride anhydrous 50mg/mL) outer carton

Mercury Pharma® Suxamethonium Chloride

(suxamethonium chloride 50mg/mL) outer carton

Action required by SA Health staff:

1. Be aware of the availability and strengths of different suxamethonium injection products, particularly that Succinolin® contains the equivalent of 110mg suxamethonium chloride.
2. Ensure appropriate checking procedures are in place when selecting, administering and storing suxamethonium injection products.

Action required by SA Health services:

1. Ensure all relevant staff are aware of and have access to this notice.
2. Conduct a risk assessment to determine if these issues are relevant to your facility.
3. Determine a local approach in conjunction with the pharmacy department, anaesthetics department, and/or other local specialists as appropriate.

Further Information

For any enquiries or concerns, please contact your pharmacist or pharmacy department directly; or email HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration Medicine Shortages Information Initiative provides details of medicines shortages and the expected timeframe for supplies to return to normal.

Issued 07 August 2020.

Government of South Australia
SA Health